ANEW

TREATISE

OF THE

ART of THINKING;

Or, A Compleat

System of Reslections,

Concerning the

CONDUCT and IMPROVEMENT of the MIND.

ILLUSTRATED

With Variety of CHARACTERS and EXAMPLES drawn from the Ordinary Occurrences of LIFE.

Written in French by Mr. CROUSAZ, Professor of Philosophy and Mathematicks in the Academy of Lausane.

Done into ENGLISH.

In Two VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for THO. WOODWARD at the Half-Moon over-against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-Street.
M. DCC. XXIV.

A NEW. MEILL TREA OF THE ART OF THINKING: Or, A Compleat System of Resections, Concerning the CONDUCT and IMPROVEMENT HARACTIRS Terrs / arreft and Examples down from the Ordinary Occuments of LIFE. Whitelet in French by Mr. CROURAR. Photograp of Philosophy and Muchemacieks in the Academy of Laulane. Done into Ewclish. In /I wo Voi unes. LONDON Plated for TRO WOODWARD at the Half Moon

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SECT. III.

Of the Diversity of our Ideas, with respect to our different Ways of Thinking of Objects.

CHAP. 1.

Of Clear and Obscure, Distinct and Consused I D E A S.



UR different Ways of Thinking require different Rules.
The Divertity of our Perceptions does not proceed only from our Ction.

having more than one Faculty, and from the great Difference of Objects; but the same Faculty forms also different Ideas of the same Sub-

ject, according as that Faculty confiders it.

Tis no wonder that we have not the same Idea of a Triangle and a Circle, of a Number and a Virtue. Those Vol. II. B Objects

Objects are so different, that the Idea of the one cannot make us know the other. But, without proceeding to another Object, the Impression, for Instance, which the Sight of a Triangle makes upon the Eyes, has fomething more lively in it than the Idea preserved in the Imagination; and the Understanding conceives in a Triangle and other Figures a Regularity, a Smallness of Parts, a Thinness of Lines, which the Imagination cannot attain to: So that, not only the Difference of Objects, but also the Difference of the Faculties, occasions a Difference of Ideas. This is undeniable.

I we reflect never fo little upon our own Experience, we shall be likewise convinced, that according to the different Degrees of Attention, and according as we treat a Subject with more or less Order, the Ideas we form of it, are more or less accomplished, or more or less perplexed. We must reduce to different Classes the Differences arising from that third Cause, and go on with our Endeavours to make

each of our Ways of Thinking as just as possible.

Ideas are obfcure or confused only relatively.

II. THE Diffinction of Ideas into clear and obscure, distinct and confused, offers itself first. And indeed it is one of the most usual and important Distinctions.

THE Ideas, which the same Faculty forms of the same Object, are not always

equally clear and equally distinct. In that respect there is a great Variety of Degrees; for, those Distinctions appear to me relative, and not absolute, that is, I cannot say that an Idea is absolutely obscure or absolutely confused; and if I give this last Name to some Idea, 'tis only with respect to the Evidence and Clearness to which it should rise.

EVERY Idea is an Act, which perceives itself; and therefore it has effentially some Life and some Activity; it affects us with fome Force. Since it is known and perceived, it has some Clearness, some Evidence. Since we are conscious of it, we can distinguish it from every thing of which we are not conscious, and from every Sentiment, which is not altogether like it: And therefore it has necessarily fome Distinction, some Character whereby it is diffinguished and specified.

EVERY Idea represents also to us some Object, either actually existing, or at least possible; for we have no Idea of what is impossible; and that Object, by means of its Idea, is known and distinguished from all those which are

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Why it has

I GRANT that all our Ideas do not discover to us their Objects with the same Clearness and the same Exactness, and do not enable us to distinguish them one from another with the same Facility; and therefore I acknowledge several Degrees in the Evidence and Distinctness of Ideas.

MOREOVER, Men often fancy to know an Object, which they do not know, and frequently suppose they have an Idea of it, tho' that Idea does not represent it. But tho' a Man may be mistaken in applying too hastily a clear and distinct Idea to an Object, which it does not agree to; yet that wrong Application is no Proof of its absolute Obscu-

rity and Confusion.

WHEREFORE every Idea has effentially some Clearness and some Distinctness; but the most lively, that is, those which are best perceived, are the clearest, and for that very reason, the most distinct. We distinguish more easily what makes a more lively Impression upon us, because it raises a greater Attention. Thus Clearness and Distinctness are two different Characters; but one of them is always a Consequence of the other.

NEVERTHELESS obscure and confused Ideas are fometimes mentioned, as if there were obscure and confused Ideas, absolutely speaking. And therefore I pretend that Philosophers have not expressed themselves about this Subject with a sufficient Exactness. Here follow, in my Judgment, some Causes of the Mistake of some Persons,

and of the unexact Expressions of others.

III. First, a Man conceives an Object un-

der a general Idea, that is, as I shall shew been thought more at large hereafter, he conceives it under otherwise. fome Attributes, which are common to it with many others. That general Idea is certainly clear, and distinguished from any other; but because it is frequently expressed by a determinate Word, it gives occasion to believe that it is also determinate. Whereupon a Man fancies that he knows determinately the Object to which it is applied, and that he has an Idea of it agreeable to the Name he gives it; for would any one be accounted a Man, who speaks without knowing what he says? A Man therefor: believes that he has a determinate Idea of an Object: however he is fenfible that he does not know it determinateby, and that he does not diffinguish it from others with a fufficient Clearness. He will then fay, that he has indeed an Idea of it, but that it is obscure. The Truth is, that the general Idea, which he has, is clear; but he has not Vot. II. B 2

the determinate Idea, which he calls obscure; he only pre-

tends to have it.

I SEE a Loadstone, that turns towards the Pole: I conclude immediately that a Caufe produces that Direction. The general Idea of Cause is raised in my Mind. It is a clear Idea; and I know very well what the Word Cause fignifies in general. But, not being fatisfied with that general Idea, I call that Cause, whatever it be, a Sympathy with the Northern Pole, and I afcribe to the opposite Side an Antipathic Quality. Have you any Idea of those Sympathic and Antipathic Virtues? Have I any Idea of them? What a Question is this? Do you take me for a Man, who speaks without knowing what he fays? Explain your felf then. I tell you that I have Ideas; but I confess they are obscure. When a Man talks so, 'tis as if he should say, I have Ideas, but I have them not. To conceive is to have Ideas; and not to conceive is to want Ideas. It is well known that a Caufe produces the Direction of the Loadstone; but that first Idea is the general Idea, &c. of Cause equally applicable to all Causes. When it is called afterwards a Sympathy with the Pole, those Words add nothing to the general Idea. A Man fancies to have a more determinate Idea, tho' he has it not, and complains of its Obscurity without any reason.

MEN confirm themselves particularly in that Mistake, when, upon occasion of some Resemblance, they apply to a Subject, of which they have only a general Idea, the Name of another, which they know more determinately. For Instance, they observe sometimes regular Periods in Diseases, and sometimes, on the contrary, irregular Vicissitudes, unexpected Returns: What should heat a fick Perfon, cools him; and what is defigned as a Cooler, heats him. They form clear Ideas of those Facts: besides, they know that those things have a Cause; and this is also a general and clear Idea. But because they are willing to have a more particular Knowledge, they fay, Nature is at rest to recover her Strength; they talk of Crises, Revulfions, &c. and those Words, Sight, Rest, Revulsions, &c. which, being applied to certain Subjects, are attended with Evidence, fignify nothing, when applied to fick People, and their Diseases. But a Man cannot resolve to own that he fpeaks without Ideas: Such a Confession would be too shameful. He is willing to secure his Honour by pretend-

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THAT Language is very fashionable in Physick; and we need not wonder at it. Sick People are timorous; and Timorousness makes a Man credulous. Speak to a frighted Man with a steady Voice, you will make him believe any thing: nay, we are told that 'tis the Interest of a sick Person that he should be imposed upon. Thus Charity joins with Self-Love; for, after all, a Man must live, he must be respected, he must keep his Post, and not suffer a new Comer to get all the Practice: He must therefore never appear perplexed; he must always decide peremptorily. Thus Men, by reasoning about Things unknown to them, use themselves to believe that they have obscure Ideas, when

they have no Ideas at all.

THAT Fault has crept into all Sciences. When a Scholar asks his Master a Question, one would think the latter is afraid of disgracing himself and the Commonwealth of Learning, if he should expose his Authority never so little. Wherefore, it being an inviolable Law with him to make himself respected, he answers immediately, and often the more boldly as he is more perplexed. His Air of Considence is a Disguise under which he hopes to conceal his Ignorance. The Scholar, amazed at the Readiness of the Answer, appears satisfied; he thanks his Master, who applauds himself, and is never better pleased than upon those sudden Occasions. Self-Love makes him believe that he has returned a very good Answer: he slatters himself that he has advanced nothing without Ideas, at least obscure ones.

THE Truth is, that in the greatest Nonsense, each Word by itself may fignify something: "Tis their Collection that signifies nothing. A Man fancies he has an Idea of the Whole, at least an obscure one, because he has a clear Idea of each Part. This is the second Cause, which makes us believe that we have Ideas of what we have no Ideas, and consequently that we have Ideas absolutely ob-

fcure.

THE Nonsense of the Schoolmen, and of some Versisiers and Orators, is like that of Riddles. In a Riddle the Signification of each Word is known; and every body has a clear Idea of it: But when we do not know the Subject to which all those Words may agree, we have not an Idea of the whole. If we form an Idea, to which one half of the Words agree, we have a clear Idea of a Subject, to which one half of the Words may agree; but we have neither a B 3

clear Idea, nor an obscure one, of a Subject to which all of

them may be applied.

I FORBEAR clearing this Matter with Examples; for I don't think it fit to amuse the Reader with Fictions of my own; nor am I willing to enlarge too much in my Criticisms upon the Works of other Authors. Reading and Conversation will afford but too many Examples to those, who will make use of the Remarks I have just now made.

I r generally happens that one and the same Word offers to the Mind more than one Idea; for there are very sew Ideas perfectly simple. Now each of those Ideas, which are united under one single Word, may be very clear, tho their Collection be not so. Nay, that Collection may be a mere Fiction; and therefore a Man will have no Idea of it; but he will suppose that he has one, and call it obscure.

Some pretend that Gravity is effential to Matter, and that a Body, because it is a Body, tends with a continual Inclination towards a Center. When they pronounce the Word Body, the Idea of Extension offers itself to their Mind, and it is a clear Idea: They also clearly conceive what a Motion of Descent and a Determination towards a Center is. The Word Inclination, if it be consider'd by itself, expresses also clear Ideas. Inclination includes Knowledge and Desire; and we know what Knowledge and Desire are. But if you endeavour to collect all those things into one Notion, viz. that of an Extension, which knows a Center, which desires to come near it, and tends towards it, your Endeavours will be useless: "Tis a suppositious Collection: You must not say that you have an obscure Idea of it: You don't know it at all.

Ir happens also frequently that we give a Name to a Collection of whatever is contained in a Subject; but if among the Attributes included in one Subject, we know some of them, and are ignorant of many others, we must not infer from thence that we have an obscure Idea of that Subject, considered as a Whole. We have clear Ideas of what we know of it, and we have none of what we are ignorant of, excepting the general Idea of Reality, which is clear, whilst we consider it as general. When we know a thing only in part, we have a clear Idea of that Part; but we have no Idea of those we are ignorant of. Our Idea is

therefore imperfect, but not obscure.

THE Imperfection of our Ideas is a third Cause, which moves us to believe that we have some Ideas that are absolutely obscure. We speak of the Obscurity of our Ideas,

as of a certain defective Quality inherent in them, and by which they are specified, and distinguished from those that are clear. Obscurity is a Defect in our Knowledge; but it is a mere Defect, a mere Negation, an Absence of Ideas. A Town is covered with a Fog: I don't see what that Obscurity hides from me: I perceive what it leaves open. A Fog may be so thick as to hinder me from knowing whether what I see be an Oak or a Walnut-Tree, &c. but it does not hinder me from being sure that 'tis a Tree. I plainly see it is a Tree; but I don't see what Kind it belongs to. The Idea of Tree is clear: 'Tis the only one I have; but I have no Idea of the Kind.

COMPARISONS are commonly used to clear a Subject, and to come to the Knowledge of what we don't know of it, by the Relations it has with what we know already, But if a Comparison is not just, or if it be wrongly applied, it discovers nothing, it affords no Idea; but we suppose it

does, and are pleased to fay, it is an obscure Idea.

SOME Endeavours have been used to give some Notion of the Trinity by the Comparison of the three Dimensions of Matter, Length, Breadth and Depth, which make up but one Solid. The Understanding, the Will, and the Memory, three different Faculties of one and the fame Soul, have been used to the same Purpose. But those Comparifons prove only that Diversity is not absolutely inconsistent with Unity; that what is multiple in one respect, may be one in another respect. This we clearly apprehend in general; but when we use those Helps to have a Notion of the Trinity, we find they are infignificant. No determinate Idea arises from thence. However, we suppose the contrary, and call a pretended Idea an obscure one. Some antient Fathers argued thus: Peter, John, and James, are three Persons; and yet there is but one humane Nature: Therefore one fole Nature may subfift in three Persons. If a Man applies that Comparison to the Trinity without a Lenitive, he will certainly be very heterodox; and if in order to mend what is defective in it, he makes fome Alteration in the Signification of the Words Person and Nature, he removes the Ideas which he had raifed, without substituting others in their room. A pretended Light is fucceeded by Obscurity, that is, wrong Ideas are succeeded by a Privation of Ideas.

LASTLY, Most Words, used by Men, express their Sentiments and Passions rather than their Ideas. Men frequently annex no Idea to their Expressions; and because B 4

they cannot explain those Expressions, they fancy their

Ideas of them are obscure.

AN ordinary Man, for Instance, breaths nothing but Vengeance and Blood, because, says he, he has been attacked in his most tender Part, his Honour. Ask him what he means by that Honour, which appears to be the only Caufe of all his Transports, he knows not what to anfwer. Shall we infer from thence that he has only an obscure Idea? Let us examine his Thoughts: He has the Idea of a Word spoken, as he thinks, to his Prejudice, of the Person who vexed him, and of his Contrivance to deprive him of his Life. Such are his Ideas, Befides, he apprehends that if he remains quiet, he will be laughed at, and exposed to new Infults. But when he alledges his Zeal for Honour, he only speaks a Word, by which he knows that Men are used to justify their Violence: He speaks it, that others may fay he is in the right: He has an occasion to use that Word; he uses it without annexing any Idea to it, will or be housed orad our

OUR Languages fwarm with fuch Words. Men fill their Discourse with them, like Children, who repeat the Words they have heard upon a certain occasion, when that occasion offers itself a second time. Thus Children learn to admire, to praife, to fwear, to give hard Words, of which they understand neither the Origin, nor the Sense, and which are often as infignificant as the Grimaces with which they vex one another. Thus also they often learn

to pray.

THE most facred Words, Religion, Faith, Sacrament, as well as the Words Scandal and Herely, are spoken in the fame manner, and repeated upon occasion, without any Meaning. They are Signs of Prejudices and Passions, and not Expressions of Ideas. Those Words are at most attend-

ed with fome Senfations; but because Sen-Sect. I. Ch. 2. fations (for the Reasons abovementioned) cannot be expressed by Words. Men pretend to have Ideas of them, but too obscure to be unfolded.

CHRISTIANS are divided into feveral Communions; and almost every Man fancies that the Society in which he was born, is the only true Church, the true Bride of Christ; that it contains the chosen People; that it is the Mother of the Faithful; and that in order to be faved, one must be a Member of it. But ask most People what they mean by the Word Church: Ask them which are the Characters of a Society, that deserves to be called a true Church: Defire them

them to unfold the Ambiguity of that Word: They will quickly be forced to tell you, that they are not Doctors, and that they have only obscure Ideas about that Subject. The Truth is, they have no Ideas at all. Men, from their early Years, are used to annex a Sense of Respect to the pompous Words Church, Bride of Christ, Mother of the Faithful. When they speak those Words, they are affected with a great Zeal, and think they may hope for Salvation, without being at all concerned, tho' they difgrace that Church by their Baseness, by unlawful Pleasures, a shameful Avarice, &c. A Mother has wilful Children, who, the greatest Part of the Time, indulge only their Humour and Caprices; but they have some Zeal for her Concerns, and oppose her Enemies with all their Might. By fuch a Character she knows they are her Children, and she forgives them their Faults. Men flatter themselves with the same Impunity, because they call the Church their Mother. When we see how zealously a Man, who has got a Preferment, defends the Rights of his Church, the Contempt he expresses for those who differ from him, and his Uneafiness at the least Appearance of a danger of Heterodoxy, one would be apt to think that he is of the right Stamp. But, if you examine his Conduct never so little, you cannot make the same Judgment of him. He is unconcerned for Knowledge, and minds only Words; and because he has a fiery Zeal for Religion, without knowing the Power of it, he has no manner of Scruple about the Faults he is guilty of. Among those who are called Christians, with what Fury will Soldiers and Officers take up Arms in a Religious War? With what Zeal will they expose themselves to the most dreadful Dangers? But you will hardly find any Christian Duty performed by those Zealots.

ONE would think many Masters are afraid their Scholars should learn to prefer Ideas to mere Words. In many Places School-Boys are taught to this day in a Language which they do not understand, the Rules whereby they are to learn it; and it has been a very difficult thing to abolish that ridiculous Custom in some Schools. But there are still many Abuses, that want to be mended. An Author is put into the Hands of a Boy, who might be well pleased, if he understood him; but a Pedant takes care to prevent it. He stops him at every Word to amuse him with some Phrase; and the Time allotted for his Instruction, being thus spent in Trisles, the Boy remembers some Words, but

has no Ideas.

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Mos r of the Words just now mentioned have a Sense, and raise just Ideas in many People; but in others they excite no Idea at all, and only revive fome Ways of Thinking, which we call Sensations. The same may be faid of a great many other Words: Men of Sense understand them; but the Vulgar use them without any Meaning; and the Word Vulgar takes in many People, who think themselves much above them. For Instance, when Men discourse of the absolute Right of Sovereigns, and look upon their Moderation as an Effect of their Goodness, they hardly know what they fay. In Cases of an absolute Necessity, a Sovereign may dispose of his Subjects, and even of their Lives: The Society has that Right over its Members; and the Sovereign is invested with the Rights of the Society. But, excepting those Cases, has the Sovereign a Right as King, to demand of his Subjects a third Part, or one half of their Estates? Can he do it without Injustice? And can it be faid that what he leaves them is an Effect of his Favour? How can he have that Right? Is it because he has invaded it? But is there any Right grounded upon Violence or Craft? Must the Law of the Strongest be confounded with the Law of Justice? Has Goo given some Men a Right over others, which tends only to make unjust Men' on the one hand, and unhappy Men on the other? Lastly, Did Men agree to undergo that Yoke? Tho' a Society had been so blind and so extravagant as to make such a Concession, yet it could not have been accepted without Inhumanity, and confequently without Injustice. And therefore what is it so many People mean, when they speak such a Language? Being used to tremble at the Name of a Sovereign, they are fenfible that if he would deprive them of the little they have, the best Course they could take, would be to bear it patiently, and without any Complaint.

IMPIOUS Men use Words void of Sense, as well as superstitious Men, An Insidel, being hard pressed, has recourse to the Words Fatality and Chance, whereby he might perceive that he is reduced to speak without knowing what he says. When he is asked whether the wonderful Disposition of the Universe has no Cause, or whether it proceeds from a blind Cause, destitute of Intelligence, instead of answering, he evades the Question by saying, Perhaps 'tis a Fatality, perhaps 'tis a mere Chance. But are that Fatality and that Chance nothing at all, or are they something? Are they blind or intelligent Causes?

When

When they are obliged to explain themselves, the Difficul-

ty begins again, and preffes them hard. A pro-

CERTAINLY there is nothing in the Jargon of the Schoolmen more obscure than the Principle of Spinosa. Not only an Objection against Religion affords some Men a Pretence to reject it; but they are fond of Obscurity itself, if it be serviceable to Irreligion. Which shews that Impiety lies in the Heart: Any thing is good, that seems to favour it. Some Men, who dispute against Demonstrations, yield without any Repugnancy to a Collection of Words, which does not come up to a small Probability, or, when rightly examined, signifies nothing at all.

Ir appears from what has been faid, that to have clear Ideas is, in other Words, to have Ideas and understand what one says; and to have obscure Ideas is, in more exact Words, to speak without Ideas, and to suppose that one understands

what he does not understand.

It is no easy thing to apprehend what some learned Persons meant, when they said that clear Ideas cannot be accounted true, till they are verified either by Experience, or Analysis. For, is that Analysis composed again of other Ideas, which must be likewise demonstrated analytically? And must the Ideas of the Senses, by which we are sure of Experience, be also demonstrated by other Experiences?

IV. IT appears from thence, that all our The Usefulness Knowledge runs upon the Clearness of our of clear Ideas. Ideas; that we are the less mistaken in our

Reasonings, as we understand better what we say; and on the contrary, that we are the more liable to Mistakes, as the Subjects about which we decide, are less known to us.

We cannot therefore be too careful to have clear Ideas, nor too cautious about Words, the Signification whereof is not sufficiently determinate, and which suppose Ideas we have not. It is a Principle of Experience, and we may be convinced of it by our own Sentiment, if we reflect upon what passes within us, that the clearer an Idea is, and the more we are affected with it, the more fruitful it is, and proper to raise other Ideas, and consequently to increase our Knowledge.

BESIDES, the Mind, being fond of lively Sentiments, is more intent upon its Ideas, according as it is more affected with them; and Attention, as I have observed before, is the great Principle of the Fruitfulness of our Minds, and

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of the Rife of our Ideas. I add, that the Force and Perseverance of our Attention confirms Memory, and imprints our Thoughts more deeply in it. Lastly, we are the less liable to Error as we are more attentive, and confequently as our Ideas raife our Attention with greater Force by their Clearness and Evidence.

How to pro- V. Bur that Attention which is supportthat ed by the Clearness of our Ideas, is recipro-Clearness. cally of use to raise that Clearness; it produces that Evidence, by which it is ftrengthened in its turn; and it has been rightly faid by an Author, that Attention is the Mother of convincing Evidence; so that all the Rules I have prescribed in order to raise our Attention, will contribute to the Clearness of our Ideas, if

they are observed.

SIMPLE Ideas are not obscure, fince they are simple; but they are not clear enough for most People; that is, they are not lively enough, because Men do not sufficiently dwell upon them. A Man is lively affected with every thing upon which he thinks attentively; but because Simplicity does not affect the Mind, which is used to Variety, he does not dwell upon simple Ideas; he runs over them hastily: Which is the Reason why he does not perceive the Repugnancy to be found between what he lays down in his fubsequent Reasonings, and simple Ideas, which are the Ground of our Knowledge. Wherefore I recommend it, as one of the most important Rules, to be intent upon simple Ideas, and to grow very familiar with them. From simple Ideas we must proceed to those that are compounded: We must not be contented to have Ideas of those things that are put together; we must also conceive their Union.

WANT of Order in our Studies is one of the main Caufes of the Obscurity of our Knowledge, and of the Errors arifing from that Obscurity. Men are taken up with too many things at the fame time; they proceed hastily from one Book to another; they apply themselves sometimes to one Question, and sometimes to another, as occasion offers; and the Order of their Studies is rather an Effect of Chance

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than of a wife Choice,

A MAN lights upon a Book, in which the Author, having laid down fome Imaginations of his own, as the most important Points of Religion, exerts all his Wit to shew their Repugnancy to Reason. The Reader begins then to disbelieve the Truth of Religion. istene great Principle of the Irbittlinets of our Minds, and

ANOTHER Author displays with a great deal of Art all the Weaknesses of Man, the Imperfection of his Faculties, the Narrowness of his Knowledge, the Power of Prejudices, and the Difficulties to be overcome in order to find out Truth. From thence he concludes that it is a piece of Presumption to look for Truth; that Prudence, as well as Modesty, requires from a Man humbly to submit to the Decisions of those who are more knowing than himself. A lazy Reader, who minds nothing but his worldly Concerns, is very well pleased to rely upon the Judgment of others.

A MAN who never read the Philosophers, having pickt out here and there some Passages, frequently understood in a wrong Sense, inveighs against Philosophy, and setting it in opposition to Religion, will make many People believe that a Man is the better Christian, as he is less rational. But certainly the Gospel-Wisdom does not consist in departing

from Reason and good Sense.

Some, on the contrary, under pretence of avoiding Superstition, pitch upon an easy Scheme of Life, agreeable to their Taste and their prevailing Passions; they ground it upon loose Arguments, great Examples and Quotations. They are pleased to call that Scheme Wisdom, Philosophy, Greatness of Soul, and Strength of Mind. When a Man is fond of extraordinary things, tho' he be free from great Vices, he will sometimes receive, like so many Oracles, a thousand bold and unguarded Propositions, built upon very weak Proofs.

UPON all those occasions, any Man will be a Disciple of the first Author he lights upon: And how can it be otherwise? He never inquired what Reason, Religion, Truth, Virtue, Wisdom, Modesty, Credulity, Faith, and Distrust are; he never studied the Parts of which those primitive Notions are composed; he has only some Ideas belonging to those Words, which he pronounces, knowing but one half of what he says. Wherefore he finds himself perplexed in the Consequences he draws from Principles imperfectly known to him. When a Man has not studied methodically, he gropes in the Dark, and concludes at random.

WANT of Method, and Precipitation in our Studies, is the reason why we collect under one Name many Ideas, which we have not sufficiently considered, and the Connexions whereof we do not apprehend. From thence proceed the Errors and Misunderstandings of Men of Letters. One supposes a Collection, which he does not conceive, and

gives

gives it a Name. Another uses the same Word to express a different Collection, which he also supposes, without having an Idea of it. Their Suppositions are contrary; and therefore they fall out together. But if each of them understood himfelf, and advanced nothing but what he conceives, they would agree, and it would appear that both of them think alike.

A M A N cannot use himself to Evidence too early; and then he will by no means rest satisfied with Obscurity. Wherefore I advise to begin, as soon as possible, some Studies free from Obscurity and Confusion. The Reader will easily perceive that I mean Mathematicks; and because they confift of many Parts, a Man may chuse those which

are best adapted to his Genius and Capacity.

WHEN we defire to get a clear Knowledge of an Object, we must use that Faculty which has the greatest relation with it. If a Man born deaf should fancy that Sounds are fomething like Colours, and if a Man born blind should represent to himself Colours under the Idea of Sounds, one of them would think he has an obscure Idea of Colours, and the other of Sounds; but they would have no Idea at all. We fall into a like Fault, when we go about to imagine what is too vast to be represented by the Imagination. What paffes with too great a Rapidity, does also escape Imagination. A Motion which, in the twinkling of an Eye, should run over a hundred Toises, is not imaginable; and yet the Mind conceives the Possibility of many Motions much swifter. In like manner, when we are willing to know Thought, its Operations, its different States, with the help of Imagination, we attempt what is impossible; and then we complain that we have only obscure Ideas. But the Truth is, we have no Ideas, or quite other Ideas than those we should have; for, the Ideas we have then, do not agree to the Subject they are applied to. We don't conceive that Application; we have neither a clear nor an obscure Idea of it.

I HAVE faid more than once in this Chapter, that Men fancy they have fome obscure Ideas, when they really have no Ideas at all. The Reason of it is very frequently, that they fancy to understand certain Words, which they do not understand, or only in part. To what they understand they are willing to join what they do not understand, and they add to those Words a Collection of Significations, of

which they have no Idea.

In order to avoid those Mistakes, we must inquire into the Signification of every Word; and because its Sense will be expressed by other Words, we must also explain them, and go on, till we come to Words, that represent only fimple and evident Ideas: That is, we must observe with respect to Words the same Method, which I have proposed

with respect to Ideas,

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THOSE Explications which clear the Sense of a Word, are called Definitions. Those Definitions must be placed in the room of the Words that are defined. A fingle Word is quickly pronounced, and the Mind does not dwell long enough upon it to know whether it conceives whatever is supposed to be expressed by that Word. But because Definitions are longer, and offer unfolded Notions to the Mind; we have Time enough to see whether those Notions are confistent, or contradictory, and whether we apprehend their Connexion.

I DON'T pretend that we ought to practife that Rule at every Line we read, and at every Period of our Discourse. Such a Work would be needless and troublesome. That Exactness is only necessary in the Beginning of one's Studies: There is no need of repeating continually the Examination of those Words, that have been cleared. At first, we must distrust them all; but afterwards it will be sufficient to examine those which we do not remember to have already examined.

BECAUSE most Men do hardly raise themselves above their Senses, their Words rather express what they feel, than what they conceive; that is, their Expressions are not Signs of their Ideas, (for they have none frequently) but only of their Sensations; and I have observed in the Beginning of this Work, that our Sensations do not discover to

us what Objects are in themselves.

VI. THE natural Propenfity of Man to Why Men are be contented with Sensations, is one of the pleased with Reasons why there are so many Words that Obscuring. have no Ideas annexed to them. That Propenfity is generally seconded by Education. Those Children who speak most, are most caressed. Their want of Sense, and even the Extravagance of their Discourse, raises a Laughter; and if they speak boldly, their Nonsense is eafily forgiven.

AFTERWARDS, instead of correcting those Faults of their early Years, their Masters take care to confirm them. School-Boys are clogged with Lessons they do not underthere is a survey of the managery in the

stand; and if they repeat them with a bold Delivery, those Masters are satisfied; that is, the most impudent is the most commended. When they take notice of the Faults of their School-fellows, if they fay any foolish thing, it is not minded; but if they have a lucky Hit, they are rewarded; by which means they use themselves to say any thing that comes into their Mouth. Great Words and fine Phrases are recommended to them above all things, and make the principal Subject of the Encomiums bestowed upon them. The repeating of some Sentences, which they do not understand, goes by the Name of Piety; and to make them fuck in Religion with their Mother's Milk, what is adapted to their Capacity, and what is above it, are jumbled together. Thus they are used to have a devout Respect for Words, and to make their Salvation depend upon a great Zeal for mere Sounds (a). When they are a little more forward, they are taught to express themselves in a figurative Style. to venture upon Metaphors, to make Allusions, and scrape here and there fome pompous Sentences to make right or wrong Explications of them in their Exercises; and Words are always more minded than Things.

I HAVE already observed how Men, who pretend to be more knowing than others, out of a false Point of Honour, conceal their Ignorance under great and infignificant Words. The Ridicule of that Jargon is sometimes found out; but part of it never fails to be undiscovered. Diligent, but unjudicious Scholars, or those who study by other Motives than that of knowing Truth, boldly transcribe what their Masters say, learn it carefully; and when their turn comes to teach, they repeat it with as little Judgment as they

⁽a) It feems to me, that we use Prayers like a Jargon, and like those Men, who use holy and divine Words in Witchcraft and Magick; and that we fancy the Effect of our Prayers depends upon the Sound or Disposition of the Words. For, having our Souls full of Concupiscence, without any Repentance, without being reconciled to God, we offer up to him those Words, which Memory suggests to our Tongues, and hope by that means to make an Expiation for our Faults. There is nothing to easy, so gentle, and favourable, as the Divine Law. It calls us, tho' we are so faulty and detestable: It lends us a helping hand, and takes us into its Bosom, tho' we be never so dirty. We should in Requital look upon it with a good Eye, receive its Pardon with Thanks, and at least for that Moment, be forry for our Faults, and renounce those Passions, which moved us to transgress Go D's Laws. Montagne, Book I. Ch. LVI.

learned it. Thus Words void of Sense pass from one Generation to another, and are respected upon account of their Antiquity. Those who pretend to oppose what has been respected for some Ages, are called rash Innovators.

No other Language was known in the Schools before the last Century: It is still kept up in many Schools; and in some others it is attended with more or less Clearness. The great Character of a Philosopher did formerly confift in disputing much, in being always ready to attack or defend any Opinion. A neat Expression might have put an end to the Comedy at the very first Scene; but to make it last longer, they began with some Negations. When they were pressed harder, they made use of some Distinction, but in fuch a manner that its Obscurity occasioned a new Obscurity, under pretence of an Explanation. Those pretended Explanations occasioned new Objections. Each Disputant appeared indefatigable; and the Respondent derived his Glory from the Length of the Attack, which he had fustained without being worsted. They did in Earnest what is sometimes done out of Frolick, when some Men speak only in Verses, and each of them begins his Verfe with the Word that ends the last Verfe of anor ther. It looks like a continued Discourse; but it has only the Appearance of it: The Words are connected, but the Sense is not. This will always happen, when Men are contented to know that certain Words are used to be applied to a certain Subject, without knowing diffinctly that Subject to which they are applied (b) and a too stoods

Vor. II. over the Coutyboff grove held at

⁽b) Men born blind, who defire to fee, do not understand what they defire. They have learned from us, that they want fomething, which we have. They give it a right Name, but know not what it is, and have no Notion of it. I have feen a Gentleman of a good Family, born blind, or at least so early blind, that he does not know what Sight is. He uses, as we do, Words for whom he stood Godfather, was presented to him. He took for whom he stood Godfather, was presented to him. him into his Arms, and faid, Good Lord! what a fine Child! what a Pleasure to see him! what a chearful Countenance! He fays, as we do: This Hall has a fine Prospect : It is a fine Sunlhine. Nay, because he knows that we love Hunting, playing at Tennis, and shooting at a Mark, he appears fond of those Exercises, and fancies he has the same Share in them as we have. They tell him, there's a Hare, in a plain Ground where he may gallop; and then they tell him, We have taken the Hare. He is as proud of it as others are. Montagne, Book II. Ch. XII.

AN extravagant Philosophy spreads its Obscurity over the most facred Things, I mean, Theology and Religion; and there was a time, when a Man, who preferred the Language of Christ and his Apostles to the Jargon of the Schools, was called a Heretick, used ignominiously, and even condemned to Death; and this is still practised in some Places.

MEN bred up in that Obscurity, and subjected from their early Years to mean and troublesome Practices, which are accounted very material, having attained to an Age, when Reason unfolds itself, being weary of the Yoke, and finding mean and contradictory Things in the Religion they have been taught, instead of endeavouring to distinguish what is solid from what is superstuous, and to find out the Truth, reject every Thing, and fall into Atheism,

or into Scepticism, which is not less dangerous.

We have feen how Men, being contented with Words, grow familiar with Obscurity, and are pleased with it. Learned Men, falsly so called, cannot bear Evidence, because it would oblige them to reform their Systems, and begin their Studies anew. Being used to mere Sounds, even when those Sounds signify something, a Language full of Sense gives them no more Light than an insignificant Discourse. Those learned Men, falsly so called, draw the Multitude after them: Every Body follows the Decisions of those Masters.

BESIDES, a great Clearness appears too easy, and therefore is not valued. When a Discourse is easily apprehended, every Body fancies he might have said the same; but a Man is admired, when he is hardly understood: For, can any one imagine, that a venerable Man could speak so boldly, without knowing what he says? So that he is more or less esteemed, according to the Degree of his Ignorance.

WHEREFORE, if a Man should now and then speak Nonsense, he might expect to be applauded for it. One might advise those Preachers who are greedy of Praises, to speak Nonsense, were it not that a Sermon is preceded and followed by a Prayer; and that it is not lawful to deliver in the Name of the Lord possible and infignificant Things under great Words (c).

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hooting at a Mark, he appears fond of mole

⁽c) Difficulty is a Coin, which learned Men use, like Juglers, not to discover the Vanity of their Art; and People are such Fools to be satisfied with it.

However, upon some Occasions, a little Obscurity may contribute to Elegance. We are pleased with a Truth proposed under Images, which cannot be penetrated without some Attention, because it seems to us that we have found out that Truth. The Mystery of the Expression gives it an Air of Grandeur; but that Grandeur must be

Supported by the Thing offered under that Turn.

THE trifling Things we learn in our early Years are easy: Afterwards we are instructed in Things of greater Use, and therefore they require more Pains and a greater Attention. By that Means we use ourselves to annex the Idea of Importance to that of Difficulty; and, as if those two Characters were inseparable, we don't value much what appears eafy, and fet in a full Light. That Prejudice of Infancy has but too often an Influence over the other Parts of our Lives. Some Men of a great Genius, but too fond of being thought to be above others, and even above the most learned, have affected an obscure Brevity: They believed the World would have a great Idea of their Discoveries, and esteem them in proportion to the Difficulty of understanding their Works; and by that means they have not fufficiently avoided a Fault, which has been objected against the Antients, and imitated by the Schools, fince they endeavoured to make Learning more difficult than useful.

ANOTHER Cause of that ridiculous Habit of undervaluing what is clear, proceeds from this; viz. That Men have been weary of Discourses, the Clearness whereof was only owing to a troublesome multitude of Repetitions, and

trivial Matters treated of by the Authors.

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MEN, who had got some Reputation by their Knowledge, and were looked upon by others as their Masters, being unwilling to be put to a Stand about any Subject, expressed themselves about those that were unknown to them,

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Clarus ob obscuram linguam, magis inter inanes:

Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur amantque,

Inversis qua sub verbis latitantia cernunt.

Lucy. lib. r.

Some Men will have a greater Esteem for me, if they don't understand what I say: They will judge of the Depth of my Sense by my Obscurity, which I hate very much; and I would avoid it, if I could avoid myself. Aristotle boasts somewhere of affecting Obscurity. Tis a vicious Assectation. Montagne, Book III. Chap. 1X.

as boldly as about those which they understood. When any Difficulty was proposed to them about Matters which they knew, far from being uneasy, they were pleased with it, because they had an Opportunity of shewing their Abilities: It was not fo, when they were pressed hard about any Subject, which they did not fufficiently understand: They were then perplexed; and the true way of getting their Friendship was to shew a respect for their dark Expressions. They pretended that too great a Clearness would depretiate the Sciences, which, on the contrary, have always re-

mained imperfect by reason of their Obscurity.

THAT Propensity of Man to Obscurity, and his Readiness to admire what he does not understand, seems to me to be also derived from deeper and more inward Dispositions. The many Springs of our Motions are not always those that are best perceived: On the contrary, their Power is not minded, because it is continual: Wherefore I say, that Man was not born for an indifferent End. A fecret Instinct makes him continually afpire to fomething great. That Pursuit is now and then interrupted by trifling Things; but 'tis only a mere Interruption. Man is continually in quest; not being satisfied with what he has known hitherto, and being sensible of the Obscurity of his Aim, he suspects it may be found in what he does not apprehend. He has admired an hundred times what he did not fufficiently know, because Novelty raises Admiration; and he has left off admiring, as his Knowledge increased, because he has discovered the Slenderness of what he knew, and because the Charms of Novelty vanished away. Thus he uses himself to reject what he knows, in order to defire what is still unknown to him, and wrapped up in Darkness. Men, in the Pursuit of a perfect Felicity, are like those Chymists, who feek the Philosopher's Stone; They find nothing that comes near it, in what is clearly known to them: They are perfwaded it is furrounded with Darkness; and therefore slighting what is clear, when they find some Passages, which appear antient and enigmatical, their Curiofity is immediately revived; They suspect and frequently believe without any ground, that the whole Mystery is to be found in those Obscurities.

VII. I T frequently happens that our Thoughts Neat Ideas. upon an Object are clear; but to that true and just Idea we join a fallacious one, whereby we suppose in the Object what is not in it: In such a case our Idea is not neat. That Expression appears to me proper enough to denote that Imper-

Imperfection; for we don't call those Things neat, that are mixed with any Thing, that does not belong to them : Thus we fay, that a Wine is not neat, even when there is nothing but Water mixed with it. Wherefore an Idea may be called neat, when it contains no ill-forted Mixture, when it does not join an Error to a Truth, and when discovering what is actually contained in its Object, it does not suppose any Thing to be in it, that is not in it. You conceive, for instance, that Motion is the State of a Body, which applies its Surface successively to those Things that surround it. Thus far you think right: But if to that clear and just Idea you add the Idea of an Effort, of a violent and forced State, or of a Tendency to Rest, your Idea is not neat; 'tis a Mixture of Truth and Error. Such are the Ideas of most Men about Virtues and Vices, moral and religious Truths, Prejudices do generally creep into the Ideas of found Reason, and even into the Expressions of the holy Scripture: We make them fay more than they fay; and what is thus added to their true Signification, takes off from the Neatness of the Ideas we should have of them.

VIII. The clearer an Idea is, the more easily it grows familiar to us; that is, the clearer our Ideas are, the more easily we can recall them upon Occasion; the clearer they are, the more easily we can range and compare them together: But one must not fancy that an Idea is familiar enough, when it is sufficiently clear. When we conceive a Thing clearly, it seems to us that we shall never forget it, and that it will offer itself whenever we want it. Experience shews the contrary, and should have taught us that what we know clearly ought to be dwelt upon, and frequently repeated, that it may grow familiar to us.

I DESTRE no other Proof of this than the Reading of History. There is nothing more easily apprehended, which is the Reason why we read History so fast: But when we read it so, how little do we remember of what we thought

we should never forget?

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In Mathematicks, the Elements of that Science are easily apprehended, because they are simple. What follows would not appear much more difficult, if a Man took care to grow familiar with the more simple Propositions, from which compounded Theorems result; for all familiar Objects, the numerous, may be recalled by Attention without much Labour.

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BECAUSE clear Ideas are accounted familiar, those that are grown familiar to us, are looked upon as sufficiently clear. And it happens every Day that a great many People, by much repeating certain Words, which signify nothing, fancy they understand them perfectly well. Men wrongly join together several Ideas; they suppose Connexions, which neither exist, nor can exist; they give Names to those Collections; they make those Names familiar to them by Use; and so reckon them among the Names clearly known. What is familiar is accounted clear, because clear Ideas easily grow familiar, and because the Mind is inclined to suppose a perfect Resemblance between Things, when they are like in some Re-

spects.

THOSE who are contented with Words, without reflecting upon their Sense, most of the ignorant People, and a great Part of the Learned, judge of the Clearness of a Discourse, according as the Method observed in it has fome Affinity with that to which they are used, and as the Words of that Discourse are more familiar to them. What is new, what is uncommon, requires Attention; but what Men are used to requires none. From whence they conclude, that what requires Attention, is obscure, and what requires no Attention, is clear. A Man would enlighten our Minds, if he was heard; another leaves us in the Dark; 'tis no matter; the latter is accounted a Man of clear Thoughts, and the other a Man hard to be understood. What is the Reafon of fo gross a Mistake? "Tis because the Sense is little minded; 'tis because Men go no farther than the Outside; which offers nothing but what is familiar. A Sermon which explains a Text according to the Rules of a pretended Logic, and is stuffed with Passages wrong-ly applied, and barbarous Terms void of Sense, will be looked upon by the Mafters of the Schools, used to that Jargon, as a Discourse very well adapted to the Capacity of the People, by reason of its great Clearness; and those who always confult those pretended Masters before they judge, will make the same Judgment of it, which they think to be a learned Decision, though an attentive Hearer finds himfelf as ignorant after that Sermon as he was before, But, tho' a Sermon should have all the Clearness of common Notions, tho' it should set Matters before one's Eyes by a very natural Order, though it should be supported throughout by Arguments as solid as the Mathematical Demonstrations; yet a Man, who is used to torm

form no Ideas, would always find it dark, because it would be different from those which he is wont to approve. Men, acting like Machines, who will not, or know not how to leave the common Road, and who will not, or know not how to be attentive, in order to understand what

they hear, are in the Dark in the midst of Light.

I'n point of Devotion, as well as upon many other Subjects. Men are contented with Words: they do not form Ideas that they may fay they understand; it is enough for them that the Words which they hear be familiar, and easy to be remembred, because they have got an Habit of. repeating them. Though a Discourse be never so clear, yet it will not be understood, unless the whole Series of the Words be minded. But a devout and superstitious Woman, half a-fleep, or taken up with Reflections upon the Countenance of those, whom she thinks to be indevout, follows, without any Pains, a Preacher, who repeats a long Train of Passages already imprinted in her Memory. She takes it kindly of the Orator, who affords her an Occasion of being well pleased with herself, and thinking she might fay the same Things. How beautiful is the Language of Canaan! fay fuch People; rational Sermons are above our Reach, we leave them to the Learned: I love a long Series of Passages; I understand them easily, and remember them better: How comes it that some Preachers depart from that Method? Can any Thing be faid that exceeds in Beauty the Expressions of the Scripture? But how can a Man forbear feeing that there is some Exaggeration in such a Discourse, and consequently that it is wrong? If nothing can exceed, nor almost equal the Clearpess of the Style of the holy Scripture; why fo many Sermons, which, not being able to clear Light itself, would only darken it? A Custom, as antient as the Church, to preach to the People in order to make the Sense of the facred Writings more easy to them, would have been wrongly introduced, and should be altogether suppressed. It would be sufficient to read the Bible in publick Affemblies; for if the Expressions of the Scripture are as clear as 'tis pretended, they will be clearer still, and want no Explication, when read in their own Place, instead of quoting them taken off from what goes before and from what follows. Is it a shocking Paradox to fay, that we are not instructed and sanctified by Words in themselves, but by their Signification and true Sense? Is it wrong to add, that an intelligible Thought may be very clearly expressed in more than one Language? Lastly,

is it a Mistake to observe, that the sacred Writers complied with the Taste and Style of their Age, and that some Expressions may be clear at a certain Time, and not at another? The clearest Style is that which is best adapted to the present State of the Hearers, and, which, for that Reason, affords them the clearest Ideas.

An important runs upon the Clearness and Obscurity of our Ideas, with a very important Observation. The Obscurity which stops our Know-

ledge, can be no Prejudice to what we know evidently. Our Uncertainty about Things unknown to us, ought not to stagger our Perswasion about those, which we know already. That Maxim cannot be contested without renouncing common Sense. If we could have no Certainty, when our Knowledge is attended with some Obscurity; the different Objects, to the Knowledge of which we may aspire, having so great a Connection one with another, we could know nothing certainly, unless we knew every Thing; and in order to say, without any fear of being mistaken, that we have learned something, we should learn every Thing all at once.

LUNDERSTAND Addition: Will that Knowledge be contested, because I have not yet learned Substraction? I understand Multiplication: Will it be said, that I fancy so, and that perhaps I don't understand it, because I am ignorant of Division? At this Rate, a Man does not understand the Simple Rule of Three, tho' he can demonstrate it, tho' he practises it without any Fault, and gives plain Reasons of every Part of the Operation: I say, he cannot be sure that he understands it, because he has not yet carried his Arithmetic as far as the Compound Rule of Three. 'Tis plain that what we know does not hinder us from being ignorant of what we know not; and, in like manner, what we are ignorant of, does not hinder us from knowing what we know.

A R E some Principles of Natural Philosophy uncertain, tho' we have very clear Notions of them, tho' they be very agreeable to the Nature of Matter, well connected one with another, and besides demonstrated by repeated and undeniable Experiments: I say, are those Principles uncertain, because we cannot make an exact Application of them to some Phænomena very much compounded, and whereof all the Gauses and Combinations are not easily unfolded?

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Shall we call into question the Principles of Morality, and the Rules of Manners, clearly grounded upon those Principles, because there may be some Cases which cannot be easily resolved? I might as well doubt, whether the Lines drawn from the Center of a Circle to its Circumserence be equal, and whether the three Angles of a Triangle be equal to two right ones; because I don't understand the Generation of all Curves.

For the same Reasons, shall I entertain any Doubt about the Demonstrations of the Existence of an eternal and almighty Intelligence, under Pretence that I don't know all the Perfections of that great Being, that I cannot conceive him such as he is, nor answer all the Questions which a rash Curiosity may start about him? Shall we believe that we don't think, because we are not able to explain the Origin and Formation of all our Thoughts? Are all those, who do not perfectly know the Nature of Motion, too credulous, because they believe the Existence of Motion? At this rate, we must doubt whether our Bodies want Food, 'till we know with the greatest Evidence how Digestion and Nutrition are performed, and 'till there are no different Opinions about that Subject (d).

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⁽d) Ubi igitur, aut qualis est ista mens ? ubi tua aut qualis ? potesne dicere? an, si omnia ad intelligendum non habeo, quæ habere vellem, ne iis quidem, quæ habeo, mihi per te uti licebit? non valet tantum animus, ut sese ipse videat; at ut oculus, sic animus sese non videns alia cernit? non videt autem, quod minimum est, formam suam fortasse: quanquam id quoque: sed relinquamus; vim certe, sagacitatem, memoriam, motum, celeritatem videt, hæc magna, hæc divina, hæc fempiterna funt : qua facie quidem sit, aut ubi habitet, ne quærendum quidem est : ut cum videmus speciem primum, candoremq; cœli, deinde conversionis celeritatem tantam, quantam cogitare non possumus: tum vicissitudines dierum, atque noctium, commutationesque temporum quadripartitas, admaturitatem frugum, &c. , Hæc igitur, & alia innumerabilia cum cernimus, possumusne dubitare, quin his præsit aliquis vel effector, si hæc nata funt, ut Platoni videtur : vel fi semper fuerint, ut Aristoteli placet, moderator tanti operis & muneris? sic mentem hominis, quamvis eam non videas, ut Deum non vides : tamen, ut Deum, agnoscis ex operibus ejus. Cic. Tusc. Quest. Lib. I.

When a Subject is only known in Part, one may raise about what is unknown, a thousand Questions, which cannot be answered without jumbling together Uncertainty with Certainty, and Obscurity with Evidence. The Vanity of pretending to know every Thing has occasioned monstrous Systems, the Parts whereof are not consistent one with another. The solid Things contained in them are mixed with so many Suppositions and ill proved Consequences, and frequently with so many Errors, that they can be no longer distinguished.

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CHAP. II.

Of the Clearness and Obscurity of WORDS.



DEAS are never perfectly obscure; but Words do frequently want Clearness, and stinctness, and formetimes have none at all. Confusion of As a Glass is said to be obfcure, when it weakens the

Clearness, Obfeurity, Distinctness, and the Language,

Action of the Objects that are feen thro' it, and when their Impression is not lively; in like manner, a Discourse, and the Words of which it confifts, are called obscure, when they do not convey into the Minds of the Hearers

the Ideas which the Orator would raife in them.

THE Impression of the Objects is too weak thro' a thick Glass, and they are not perceived, even at Noonday. But a Glass, thro' which the Rays have a free Pasfage, might, by reason of certain Configurations, disorder the apparent Place of the Objects in fuch a manner, that they could not be distinguished: They would make many Objects of one, or but one of many. Wherefore there is fome Difference between the Clearness and Distinctness, and between the Obscurity and Confusion of Images; and that Difference holds also in a Discourse. There are some Men, whose lively Imagination does easily bring forth Expressions proper to convey their Ideas into the Minds of those who hear them: Their Thoughts are immediately understood; and confequently those Men are clear in that Sense. But being hurried on by that Vivacity, they don't take care to dispose in a good Order what comes into their Minds; 'tis a Constraint they cannot bear: So that tho' we hear them with Attention, and understand each part of their Discourse, yet we have but a confused Knowledge of the Subject they handle. On the contrary, a Subject may be treated of with a proper Method to prevent Confusion, and yet be obscure. Each Part will be in its proper Place; but the Sense will not be easily understood, because the Stile is either too concise, or too careless, or obscure, for one of the following Reasons, OB- OBSCURITY is sometimes a mere Effect of the Matter treated of. The Matter may be so compounded, or so new; and in order to understand it, we must make so many Combinations, or reason upon Principles so little known to us, that it will require a great Attention, tho' the Author has endeavoured to make it as easy as he could. A Discourse may also be very clear in itself, and yet appear obscure to a Man, who is not Master of the Language in which it is written. Lastly, There is an Obscurity to be imputed to the Author; and it may be

justly complained of.

I T is not with Words as 'tis with Ideas: Some are perfectly obscure; I mean those that fignify nothing at all. "Tis true there are few Words without any Meaning; but there are some that have no more Sense in them than the Hocus-pocus of Jugglers. Such is the Entelechia of Aristotle; a Term so unintelligible, that Hermolaus Barbarus is faid to have applied himself to the Devil, that he might know the Signification of it. Some Words of that Obscurity might be also found in the frightful Language of the Schools. Men who defired to be accounted knowing Men, or perhaps were so foolish as to fancy they understood fome Matters, which they did not understand at all, had likewise the Boldness to invent Words, that might express their pretended Ideas, and frequently Interest enough to make them current.

Bur if Words that fignify nothing are scarce, it is not fo with Phrases, the Words whereof make no Sense when joined together, tho' each of them separately has a Signi-There are as many Instances of it, as there are Contradictions. But some Propositions, the they contain nothing that is contradictory, yet have no Sense at all. Aristotle defined Motion, An Act of a Body in Power as in Power. Every Word in that Definition has a Sense; but I confess I never could guess what that Philosopher

meant.

GREAT Words, and much more heaps of great Words, which fignify much less than is expected from them, are next to those Words that fignify nothing at all. The most certain Sign of a Man of a shallow Wit, is to speak without knowing what he fays; A Dwarf in a Giant's Cloaths would not be feen: Great Words discover still better the Meanness of an Orator, who affects to use them.

THOSE Words ought likewife to be looked upon as void of Sense, which do not clear at all the Subject they

are applied to. If it be asked, why Fire is hotter in Winter than in Summer; and if it be answered, that 'tis by an Antiperistasis, because Fire is then surrounded with its contrary; 'tis plain that Answer amounts to this: Fire is hotter, because the Air, that surrounds it, is colder. But this is the very thing to be accounted for. Instead of being informed about what I desire to know, I am imposed upon by a specious Word, as obscure as the Question

which I have proposed.

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SOME Words may have a true Sense in themselves, but they have none at all, either because they are wrongly applied, or because they are not understood by those who use them. If it be asked, how a Plaister draws out the Matter, which indisposes the Part upon which it is applied; or how a very small Dose of a Remedy is sufficient to drive away some Humours; and if it be answered, that it is done by a kind of Magnetism; and if the Person who returns that Answer, knows the Cause of the Phænomena of the Load-stone, and apprehends that the Phænomena just now mentioned are produced much in the same way; the Word Magnetism is a very fignificant Word. But if a Man who uses that Word, does not understand the Action of the Load-stone, nor consequently the Affinity of the Cures just now mentioned, with what happens about that Stone; 'tis plain he answers without knowing what he fays. Such a Language is perhaps more usual than 'tis commonly believed. Ignorant People remember what they have heard from Men more knowing than themselves. Afterwards they apply what their Memory suggests to them: Sometimes their Application has a Sense, and fometimes it has no Sense at all.

Some Expressions, upon certain occasions, are used in a Sense quite different from their usual Sense. When a Man, for Instance, finishes a Letter with saying, Your most humble and most obedient Servant; they he he never so sincere, yet his Thoughts often differ from the Meaning of those Words: They are only Words of course, to assure a Man that one has for him a Respect established by use. There are certainly a great many Terms, which, upon certain occasions, are applied in a quite different Sense from what they have in themselves; and consequently they signify nothing, since they signify quite another thing than what they were first designed to signify. The Word Good will afford us another Instance of it. Those who bestow that Encomium so freely upon a great many People, would

be often at a loss, if they were defired to say what they mean by that Word, and if, in Imitation of our Lord, they were asked, Why do you call him good? That great Encomium, of which Go D alone is truly worthy, is bestowed upon People who hardly deferve the Name of Men. A Person who does not appear rational in his Discourse and his Conduct, who does as much Mischief as he can, and would do a great deal more, were it not for his Stupidity, or for want of Credit, is nevertheless called a good Man by those whose Interest it is to favour him, or by those who fport with him. Some Men, being refolved to be accounted good, make it their bufiness to commend every body: The Word Good appears very proper for that Purpose; and if we consider the use that is made of it, we Thall see, that it denotes in those who use it, a fincere or feigned Defire of commending others, and at the same time a want of Merit in themselves, that deserves to be commended.

Thus a Word, which originally denotes fomething great, loses altogether its first Sense by the Application

that is made of it (e).

II. I HAVE intimated in the Beginning Usefulness of of this Work, that the Defign of Logic is, clear Words. among other things, to enable us to convey eafily our Thoughts into the Minds of others; from whence it follows, that a Man acts like a Logician, when he reflects upon those things that may contribute to the Clearness of Speech. Besides, we are so used from our Infancy. to annex Words to our Ideas; we are fo used to speak whilst we think, that Meditation may be faid to be difcourfing with one's felf. Ideas do so much depend upon the Words with which they are attended, that the Imperfections of the Language affect our Thoughts; fo that in order to think well, it is necessary to speak exactly. Obscure Words put a Stop to the Progress of our Knowledge, and clear Words facilitate that Progress.

THE Clearness of our Knowledge, and the Clearness of our Discourse, help one another. When we know a Subject, we discourse about it clearly; and when we are used to clear and intelligible Discourses, we are always

willing to understand what we fay.

MEN

⁽e) Comitiorum atque Concionum fignificationes interdum veræ funt, nonnunquam vitiatæ atque corruptæ. Cic. pro Publ. Sext.

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MEN are so used to mind Words rather than Things, that an odious Title given to a Man, is a sufficient Reason for them to condemn him. If a Man, tho' never so rational, and convinced of the Truth of the Christian Religion, is called a Heretic, a Free-Thinker, a Heathen, the Impression of those Words is too strong to doubt of the Truth of that Charge: After such dreadful Words, there is no further Inquiry. Our Passions are the Rule of our Language, and our Language is the Rule of our Sentiments. We say that our Friends are modest, and Men of Honour, and that our Enemies are proud or servile. Those whom we love, are wise Oeconomists; and those whom we hate, are covetous or prodigal Men.

III. WHEREFORE if a Man is willing A Help.

to speak clearly, let him never speak till he is sensible that he knows every thing he undertakes to teach (f). Besides, let him take care to place those Ideas which he designs to convey into the Minds of other Men, in such an order, that the first which he raises may excite others, and these others again, and so on; so that the Continuation of his Discourse may raise only Ideas, which, by virtue of their Connexion with the preceding Ideas, would arise in an attentive Hearer.

When a Man places in that manner those Ideas, which he is willing to express, he must be very careful to lay a-fide all Superfluities. The Attention is exhausted, and the Mind discouraged, when it relies upon a Help which affords no Light, and proves unnecessary. Men of a shallow Wit never fail to commit that Fault: They don't believe that insignificant Things ought to be neglected, and they sancy they will be better understood by many Repetitions and synonymous Words; but a Man cannot expect to be understood, if he grows tedious to those who hear him.

It is highly necessary in the Disposition of Ideas, to place none without perceiving their Evidence; for, as I have

(f) Dicendi enim virtus, nisi ei, qui dicit, de quibus dicit, percepta sint, exstare non potest. Cic. de Orat. Lib. I.

Nonnulli dum operam suam multi æstimari volunt, ut toto foro volitare, & à causa ad causam ire videantur, causas dicunt incognitas: in quo est illa quidem magna offensio, vel negligentiæ, susceptis rebus, vel persidiæ, receptis: sed etiam illa major opinione mea, quod nemo potest de ea re, quam non novit, non turpissime dicere. Lib. II.

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have said in the foregoing Chapter, one of the great Causes of Obscurity is to suppose that we understand what we do not understand. One precarious Supposition is sufficient to spoil every thing: Its Obscurity will have an Influence

over every thing that follows.

A MAN must have a great Extent of Mind to place his Ideas in good Order: Clearness contributes to that Extent: We run over a greater number of Objects, and compare them together more eafily, when we know them well, and when their Ideas are grown familiar to us. Not only Children are taught to speak before they are taught to think, but also those who learn the Sciences. It were to be wish'd, we had contracted a Habit of expressing ourfelves only about those Things which we know distinctly, and of mentioning them only in order to know them.

WHEN we have thus chosen and ranged our Ideas, we must proceed to the Choice of those Signs that are proper to convey them into the Minds of others. Clearness in that respect depends upon Words and their Connexion. In order to make a clear Discourse, Words and their Disposition ought to be agreeable to Use. Words fignify nothing in themselves, and would be void of Sense, if Men were not used to annex an Idea to a Sound, by being intent upon both, and frequently repeating the Connexion of an Idea with the Term that expresses it. Those frequent Repetitions enable us to recall an Idea upon occasion; but uncommon Words have not the same Effect: they are not so easily attended with Ideas; and therefore we do not so well understand a Discourse in which they are to be found; in a word, they are not fo clear.

Us rought to be followed in the Disposition of Words, in their Construction and in the Turn of the Phrases, as well as in their Signification. A Disposition contrary to the common Use and the Genius of the Language, stops the Reader; and the Attention which is due to Things,

must not be diverted by the Words.

IF the Language of Men was exact, in order to speak clearly and exactly, it would be fufficient to follow Use; but because Men are often mistaken, and represent Things to themselves otherwise than they are, the more the Names which they bestow upon Things are agreeable to their Ideas, the more they lead into Error. Whilst we rely upon those Names, we suppose Things to be different from what they are, and fancy we know them, when they are unknown to us. Besides, because the Ideas of Men vary about

about the same Subject, it happens that the same Word which a Man uses to express a certain Idea, is used by another Man to express an Idea which is very different; and tho' those Ideas are alike in some respects, yet they are for that very Reason more apt to occasion a Mislake. I have a certain Idea; I use a Word to express it; but because that Word, as it is used by other Men, denotes more or less than there is in my Idea, it easily happens that my Hearer, being used to the Sense which others give to that Word, will not take it exactly in the same Signification as I do, but will ascribe to me more than I think, or will not see all that I think.

Mosr Things have more than one Name; but those different Names of one and the same Thing are seldom perfectly synonymous. One of them is proper to represent it one way, and another will represent it better another way: A perfect Clearness depends upon a right Choice of those Words. Wherefore an Expression, in order to be clear, that is, in order to convey the true Ideas of an Orator into the Mind of the Reader, ought to signify neither more nor less than what he thinks, that is, it ought to be

fini.

IF Men used themselves to speak always clearly, it would be more easy for them to avoid Obscurity upon important Occasions, when they defire to be clear; but they cannot fucceed, because they have not got a constant Habit of doing it. In order to get that Habit, a Man should always be filent about Subjects unknown to him, about Subjects that are new, and upon which he had no Time to reflect. He should in every Subject distinguish what he clearly apprehends from what he knows but imperfectly, and from what he is ignorant of. He should be positive. about one Subject, and contented to propose his Doubts about another. He should be more willing to hear others than Men are generally. He should resolve to be clear even in his Objections. It frequently happens that a Man proposes a Difficulty only because he will not be filent, to fhew that he can fay fomething, or, which is worfe, to perplex those very Men who have a right to be heard, and in hopes of being accounted a Person of a greater Discernment, and a more extensive Wit. But this is a Mistake. There is nothing more dangerous than to pretend to be bright unleafonably; and a Man does frequently make himself ridiculous by his Eagerness to make others appear fo. Hasty Objections prove more frequently the Ignorance Vol. II.

of those who raise them, than the Mistakes of those against whom they are raised. Before a Man objects, he must have an exact Idea of the Opinion he opposes; he must understand the Principles upon which it is grounded, and consider with great Attention the Validity of the Consequences drawn from them. When a Man neglects those Things, he runs the Hazard of proposing a Dissiculty, which, instead of overthrowing an Opinion, occasions an Explanation whereby it is confirmed.

IF Authors minded Clearness more than they do, their Care of clearing their Thoughts, and setting them in a sull Light, would frequently make them sensible of their Missakes. But Authors are vain and lazy, and rely also upon the Vanity and Laziness of their Readers, who frequently acquiesce, or seem to acquiesce in what appears to them

difficult to be understood.

When the common Language does not afford Expreffions, that are just enough, they fignify too much, or too little: One must then invent new Words, or annex a more particular Signification, and a more determinate Sense, to those, that are already in use, or borrow some from another Language, or make use of many Words to make one understand what a single Word would not sufficiently ex-

prefs (g).

When a Man has new Ideas, 'tis better to express them by new Words, than to borrow those that are already in Use. A Word thus borrowed would be too ambiguous: the Idea, commonly annexed to it, would offer itself immediately: that Idea must therefore be laid aside, and another must be recalled; and those Efforts would divert the Attention, which ought to be preserved with all possible Care. But when the Things to be mentioned are sufficiently known, at least in Part, and have already their Names, if new Names should be laid upon them, the Mind would be obliged to make new Connexions without any Necessity.

Us E being the Master of Languages, when a Man introduces new Words, he seems to invade a Right belonging to the Multitude, and to pretend to command, when he is only to obey. The Publick rises up against that Rashness, as against a Piece of Tyranny, and the Inven-

stor is nothing more damerous than to preced to bes

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⁽g) Placuit pluribus verbis dicere quod uno non potuerimus ut res intelligatur. Cic. de Finibus.

tors of new Words make themselves odious, or ridiculous. Besides, Novelty raises the Attention, and when a Man comes to know that he has been affected with an inconsiderable Thing, he despises the Author. No body takes it ill that each Science and each Art should have particular Terms, since they have Objects and Instruments peculiar to them. Novelty pleases, when necessary; but it is suspected of Affectation, when we can be without it.

I r is a just Complaint, that the Public is more willing to forgive an Author, who writes Things contrary to Decency in a correct Style, than one who commits grammatical Faults, when he lays down very good Precepts. However, I confess that an Author, who neglects his Style, is wanting in his Respect to the Public, and offends against De-

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WHEN a Man writes in Latin, Custom allows him to infert Greek Words in his Book, if they express his Sense better than Latin Words; for 'ris supposed that those two dead Languages are equally known to the Learned for whom the Author writes: But a very ill use is made of Some, without any Necessity, lard that Permission. continually a Latin Discourse with Greek Words; nay, they frequently infert those Words, tho' their Sense be not fo exact as that of Latin Words would be: They think it a Dishonour to write ten Lines without such a pretended Ornament. That Affectation is a perfect Pedantry. But, though they be laughed at by every Body, their Defire of pleasing themselves prevails upon them. They do obstistinately, with respect to Pedantism, what good Men do, out of Reason with respect to Virtue. Tho' the latter be laughed at by Worldly Men, the Testimony of their Conscience makes amends for the Want of an Esteem, which is due to them.

THAT Mixture of Latin and Greek has a worse Effect fill. When an Author does not sufficiently understand the Subject he is upon, he endeavours to conceal his Ignorance under the Words of a Language which is not very familiar. Those who do not understand them ascribe the Obscurity of the Author to their own Ignorance. When it was a fashionable Thing among the Learned to be contented with Words, assoon as the Difficulty offered itself, they had recourse to a Distinction; and the Imagination of a Doctor, abounding with Greek and Latin Words, found it immediately: his Age and his Title made it valuable and current; no Body was so bold as to oppose it. That Disor-Vol. II.

der has crept into the most valuable Sciences. Let Divines seriously examine their Systems; they will find in them but too many Instances of the Precipitation of which

I complain.

ALL Arts have particular Terms. Such a Prerogative cannot be denied to liberal Arts and Sciences; but a very ill Use is made of it. The Terms called Technical by the Learned, are general Words, and consequently very ambi-One uses them in one Sense, and another in a different Sense; which occasions Disputes, not to be decided but by laying afide those general Terms, and using determinate Words, taken from the common Language; so that their pretended Brevity is only a fallacious one, which imposes upon none but Fools. They are to be pitied; and if the Public was not the worse for it, it would be a Piece of Charity to let them alone: For, what can a Man of a shallow Wit do, a Man, who never was taught otherwise, and who, being raifed to a Doctor's Chair by his Age, and other Circumstances, rather than by his Merit, is obliged to whistle to young Parrots, as he himself was whistled to, when he learned to be a Parrot?

PERHAPS it were to be wished, that an Author might use new Words and new Expressions: it would make him more intelligible; for, it frequently happens that being afraid of departing from the common Language, his Expressions discover only part of his Thoughts. That Tyranny of Use seems to be grounded, at least in some measure, upon the Fondness of Men for Words. They generally confine themselves to Words, and fancy they understand a Discourse, when it contains none, but what are fami-

liar to them.

IV. WHEN a Man is only afraid that The first Definia common Word should be taken, by reason of its different Significations, in a different Sense from that which he bestows upon it, he must use that Word, since it is in vogue; but he must at the same Time shew very exactly, and without any Equivocation, what Ideas he annexes to it. To determine the Signification of Words in that Manner, is to define them.

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It is plain that those Definitions ought to contain no Words but what are already very clear, well known, and free from Obscurity, either in themselves, or by vertue of a preceding Definition. It is also plain that an Author must not, in the Sequel of his Discourse, use a Word, already

ready defined, in a different Sense from that which he has given it; for such an Ambiguity would lead the Reader into Error.

SOME TIMES an Author begins his Work with a Definition of all the Terms he defigns to use, and sometimes he defines them, as there is Occasion for it in the Sequel of his Work. The first of those two Methods is generally sollowed; but perhaps the second deserves the Preference. I have at least frequently observed, that notwithstanding the Simplicity and Clearness of the Definitions, because they are very numerous, and most of them upon different Subjects, a Beginner is perplexed with that Multitude and Variety of Definitions, and remembers them but imperfectly: But, if an Author puts off the Definition of a Word, till he comes to explain the Matter denoted by it, that Definition pleases the Reader, because he sees immediately the Use of it, and he remembers it without the Trouble of a Repetition.

V. THERE is a great Difference between faying in what Sense a Word will be finition of
used, and affirming what is the Signification of Words.

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a Word in the Discourse of other Men. The first of those Definitions depends upon us: But in order to know the Sense of a Word in an Author, one must not only be acquainted with the Use that prevailed in his Time; but also study his Character and his Expressions, to find out whether he loved to be singular, or whether being hurried by his Vivacity, or seduced by the Imitation of others; or lastly, out of some other Weakness, he departed from the common Use, without designing to do it.

VI. WHAT is most distinct is, that
Words express two Sorts of Ideas, principal Accessory Iand accessory Ideas. The principal Idea is deas.

the Idea of the Thing itself, which remains always the same, notwithstanding the Variety of the Circumstances it is attended with. But besides that principal Idea, a Word has the Power of raising other Ideas: It takes in the Circumstances which attend the Thing itself; it does also take in the Sentiments of the Person who speaks, with respect to that Thing and its Circumstances; for, a Word has frequently the Power of discovering what he thinks about the Subject mentioned by him.

A MONG accessory Ideas, one ought chiefly to mind those, which discover the Sentiments of an Orator about the Subject he treats of; for there is a certain Way of relat-

ing a Fact, which shews what Judgment he makes of it; and it may prepoffels the Hearers. Some Expressions raise Hatred or Contempt, and others, on the contrary, raise Esteem and Admiration, tho' the Orator feems to be unconcerned.

MEN frequently dispute, because they do not understand one another; and they do not understand one another, because, tho' they annex the same principal Idea to the same Word, they do not annex to it the same accessory

Ideas.

Affassination, Duel, Rencounter, Beheading. The principal Idea annexed to those Words, is the Death of a Man; the accessory Idea, common to them all, and which, for that Reason, may be also looked upon as a principal Idea, is the Violence of that Death, its Suddenness, and its proceeding from an external Caufe. But the particular accelfory Ideas are the Idea of Death, occasioned by an unforefeen Passion; the Idea of a premeditated Murther, but with a previous Notice to the Person assaulted to shand upon his Guard; the Idea of the Death of an innocent defenceless Man, occasioned by a Coward; and lastly, the Idea of a Death ordered by the Judges. Befides, according as a Man uses any of those Words, he shews whether he approves, excuses, or condemns the Actions expressed by it.

Contentment, Gaity, Joy, Chearfulness. The same principal Idea prevails in all those Terms, and, in that respect, they are synonymous; but to that common Idea, one Man will add an acceffory Idea, and another a diffe-The fame may be faid of these Words, good Air, good Grace: they are fynonymous Expressions in their principal Idea. 'Tis an Outfide, which pleafes, and is different from the Features. According to Use and accessory Ideas, a good Grace is natural, and a good Air acquired.

THE French Word Deshonete is opposite to Chastity, and the French Word Malhonète, to Civility or Uprightness. The Signification of the French Words Sot and Fat has also been distinguished; but they are so frequently confounded together, that it is needless to define them

nicely: they will always be confounded.

An Author, no less eminent than judicious, makes the following Distinction between the Words Innocence, Wildom, and Vertue. Innocence confifts in doing no Harm, and occasioning no Trouble to the Society. Wisdom confifts in being attentive to one's true and folid Interest, in-

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by Fai distinguishing it from a seeming Interest, in a right Choice and a constant Adherence to it. Virtue goes farther: it loves the Good of the Society, and frequently prefers it to

its own Advantages.

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IF you defire plainer Examples, you will find them in the Words Axiom, Sentence, Apophtheym, and Maxim. All those Words express, in general, Truths that are agreed upon; but accessory Ideas vary their Signification. An Axiom is plainly expressed, and offers a speculative Truth. A Maxim teaches what one ought to do. The Style of a Sentence and of an Apophtheym is more concise; and an Apophtheym receives also Part of its Worth from its Author.

Enthusiajm and Fanaticism have a great Affinity. If they are to be defined, it may be faid, that an Enthusiast takes his Fancies for so many Inspirations, and that a Fanatick follows them: The former consines himself to the

Theory, and the other proceeds to Execution.

SENECA distinguishes in the following Manner the accessory Ideas of Benefit, Office, and Service, Beneficium, Officium, Ministerium (b). We receive a Benefit from a

(h) Quæritur à quibusdam, sicut ab Hecatone, an beneficium dare servus domino possit ? Sunt enim qui ita distinguant, quædam beneficia esse, quædam ossicia, quædam ministeria. Beneficium esse, quod alienus det : alienus est, qui potuit sine reprehensione cessare. Ossicium esse silienus est, qui potuit sine reprehensione cessare. Ossicium esse silienus est, qui potuit sine reprehensione cessare. Ossicium esse silienus est, qui potuit sine reprehensione cessare. Ossicium esse silienus est, qui potuit sine reprehensione cessare. Ministerium esse servi, quem conditio sua eo loco posuit, ut nibil corum quæ præstat, imputet superiori. Propterea servos qui negat dare aliquando beneficium, ignarus est juris humani; refert enim cujus animi sit, qui præstat, non cujus status. Sen. de Benef. Lib. III. Cap. XVIII.

Aliud est maledicere, aliud accusare. Accusatio crimen desiderat, rem ut desiniat; hominem ut notet, argumento probet, teste confirmet; maledictio autem nihil habet propositi, præter contumeliam, quæ si petulantius jactatur, convicium, si facetius urbanitas nominatur. Cic. Orat. pro M. Cælio.

There is a great Difference between Accusing and Slandering. An Accusation requires something that is positive: the Crime ought to be defined: one must tell the Circumstances of a Fast; bring in Proofs, produce Witnesses, and convict the guilty Person. But the only Design of Slander is to do an Injury: when it is sharp, and about Things that are important and false, it goes by the Name of Calumny: when it does only sport with small Faults, it is called Raillery.

Man, who might have neglected us, without being blamed for it. We receive good Offices from those who could not have denied them without a Fault, tho' we could not oblige them to do us those good Offices. But whatever is done for our Good, is only a mere Service, when a Man is indiffenfably obliged to do it. However Seneca rightly adds, that the Affection with which a Man performs his

Duty, deserves to be minded.

A C C E S S O R Y Ideas qualify the principal Idea: Sometimes they enlarge it, and frequently confine it: this happens to all hyperbolical Expressions. We say, that a Man Starves, when he fares ill, or has much ado to get his Livelihood. We fay, that a Man knows nothing, when he does not know what belongs to his Profession (i). We say, it is not in our Power to do what we cannot refolve upon without much Trouble, and compass without great Labour. Some Hyperboles are grown fo familiar by Use, that we take their true Sense immediately, without wanting to know that they must not be taken in their full Latitude. But we are frequently mistaken, when those Expressions concern a Subject not fufficiently known; or when they are found in a Language, with the Genius of which we are not fufficiently acquainted.

WE fay, that a Man should be ignorant of his own Merit; that is, he should be as unwilling to boast of it, as if he did not know it. We fay, that a Man must forget the Good he has done, and the Evil he has met with; that is, he must neither proclaim the former, nor reproach the latter. We give the same Name to different Actions, tho' their Effects have but a small Resemblance. Not to fix one's Attention is called to be ignorant of, to forget. Because those Expressions have been taken too literally, Morals are become a perfect Nonfense, a Heap of absurd Paradoxes and strained Maxims. Virtue has been fet in opposition to Knowledge, and Duty in opposition to Truth.

THE Sacred Writers use the same Style, even when they speak of GoD; He repented that he had made Man: He was displeased with it in his Heart: That is, the Crimes

⁽¹⁾ Quædam etiamsi vera non sint, propter similitudinem eodem vocabulo comprehensa sunt. Sic pyxidem, & argenteam & auream dicimus, fic illiteratum, non ex toto rudem, fed ad litteras altiores non perductum; sic qui male vestitum & pannofunt vidit, nudum se vidisse dicit. Sen. de Benef. Lib. V. cap. 13.

of Men would have raised those Sentiments in their Maker, if the infinite Perfection of his Nature did not set him above all Grief and all Weakness. But out of Wisdom and Love for Order, he treated Men with as much Contempt and Severity, as if he had repented of having created them.

WHEN we have some Doubts about accessory Ideas, and we can apply ourselves to the Person who speaks, we must defire him to express himself more precisely. When the Language of an Author is a living Language, Use, Books, and the Decisions of those who are Matters of that Language, will easily enable us to clear our Doubts concern-

ing acceffory Ideas.

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"T is true, those Helps are insufficient, when an Author affects to be singular in his Style; but there is little Benefit to be reaped from a Writer of such an ill Turn of Mind; and why should we endeavour to dive into his Thoughts, if he does not express himself neatly, at least in some Parts of his Work? Wherefore, it will be better to meditate, or to read some other Books better written. A Man does seldom think well, when he expresses himself very ill, tho he had Time enough to express himself better. It would frequently appear, after much Labour, that his Thoughts are foolish, or that he knew not what he meant, or that he offers only a trivial Truth under an intricate Expression.

VII. But when we read an antient Book written in a dead Language, it is more difficult to find out exactly the Force of the deas hable to Terms; for accessory Ideas do frequently Change.

vary in the same Language, and in the same

Nation; and the Force of many Words changes in Process of Time. Thus, among the *Grecians*, the Word *Tyrant*, which was a Title of Honour, became an odious Title; and among the *Romans*, the Word *Emperor*, which denoted only a General of an Army, became afterwards the Title of those who were possess'd of the Supreme Authority.

Word Ds therefore remain the same; but their Ideas are sometimes very much altered. The Word Heresy was much like the Word Hypothesis, and contained nothing in it that was odious. It was usual to say, the Heresy of the Tharisees and of the Sadducees, as well as the Heresy of the Peripatetics, Stoics, &c. St. Paul says, that before his Conversion, he followed the Heresy of the Pharisees, the most esteemed among the Jews; and he mentions that

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Circumstance as a Proof of the Uprightness of his Soul, and of his Sincerity: he makes it a Part of his Apology. If the Word Heresy had been used in our modern Sense, it should have been applied to the Sadducees with respect to the Pharisees. Hereses, that is, the different Hypotheses that were followed, had nothing in them that was odious, as Hereses or Hypotheses, and they became odious only by the nature of the Errors contained in them. But whether they were true or false, important, indifferent, or dangerous, they went equally by the Name of Hypotheses and Heresy. It is only in Process of Time that the Word Heresy has been attended with an Idea of Horror and Detestation, insomuch that one is apt to tremble at the Sound of that dreadful Word, which a great many People pronounce

without knowing what they fay.

THE public Spectacles, among the Heathens, did generally offer indecent, infamous, and barbarous things; besides, they made Part of the Worship of the Gods: Games were celebrated in their Honour, and Altars erected upon the Theaters. Those Practices afforded the antient Fathers feveral Arguments against the Religion of the Gentiles; and by declaiming with great Force, and frequently with great Reason, against some Spectacles, the Words Spectacle, Theater, and Comedy, are grown scandalous. But is it reasonable to condemn all forts of Pictures, because some of them may encourage Libertinism or Cruelty? And what are Theatrical Representations, but Pictures of humane Life? Because the Images of Jupiter and Mars were worshipped in former Times, is it now an unlawful thing to draw their Pictures? And if we look upon them, do we forget that we have renounced the Devil and all his Works?

WE ought therefore to be very careful not to make the antient Authors think otherwise than they did; and when their Expressions are like ours, we must not infer that they had the same Thoughts. When we read an antient Author, we must not carry his Ideas farther than he does. It frequently happens, that the Nature of the Thing he speaks of, explains his Words. What an Author says obscurely in one of his Books, is sometimes cleared in another; and at other times, what cannot be understood in that Author, may be understood with the Help of his Contemporaries, or of those who lived not long after him, especially the Scholiasts, who took care to explain him,

Phis office along the Ferry; and

and to support their Explication with Arguments and Authorities.

IF we don't use such Precautions to interpret the Antients, and if we rashly suppose that their Expressions had the fame Sense as ours have, we shall fill our Minds with chimerical Notions, and ascribe Extravagances to the most rational Authors. The Word Demon did formerly fignify what the Word Intelligence or Angel fignifies now. Antients distinguished Demons into good and bad; but now that Word is only used in an ill Sense; so that if we ascribe that Sense to the Antients, we shall make dying Socrates fay, that he hopes from the Goodness of the Great God to have a Place in the Company of good Devils. I have heard a celebrated Man ridicule Socrates after that manner in a very ferious Discourse. Aristophanes could not have done worse to discredit that Philosopher, or to fink the Reputation of those who had an Esteem for him. So true it is that a Man in Authority relies upon the Dullness of his Hearers (k).

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(k) A Sermon of the Lord Bishop of Bangor upon these Words, My Kingdom is not of this World, John xviii. 36.

ONE of those great Effects which Length of Time is feen to bring along with it, is the Alteration of the Meaning annexed to certain Sounds. The Signification of a Word, well known and understood by those who first made use of it, is very insenfibly varied, by passing thro' many Mouths, and by being taken and given by Multitudes, in common Discourse, till it often comes to stand for a Complication of Notions, as distant from the original Intention of it, nay, as contradictory to it, as Darkness is to Light. The Ignorance and Weakness of some, and the Passions and bad Designs of others, are the great Instruments of this Evil; which, even when it feems to affect only indifferent Matters, ought in reason to be opposed, as it tends in it's Nature to confound Mens Notions in weightier Points; but; when it hath once invaded the most sacred and important Subjects, ought, in Duty, to be refifted with a more open and undisguised Zeal, as what toucheth the very Vitals of all that is good, and is just going to take from Men's Eyes the Boundaries of Right and Wrong.

THE only Cure for this Evil, in Cases of so great Concern, is to have recourse to the Originals of Things; to the Law of Reason, in those Points which can be traced back thither; and to the Declarations of Jesus Christ, and his immediate Followers, in such Matters as took their Rise solely from those Declarations.

rations. For the Case is plainly this, that Words and Sounds have had such an Effect (not upon the Nature of Things, which is unmoveable, but) upon the Minds of Men in thinking of them; that the very same Word remaining, (which at first truly represented one certain Thing) by having Multitudes of new inconsistent Ideas, in every Age, and every Year, added to it, becomes itself the greatest Hindrance to the true understanding

of the Nature of the Thing first intended by it.

FOR Instance, Religion, in St. James's Days, was Virtue and Integrity, as to ourselves, and Charity and Beneficence to others, before God, even the Father. Ja. i. 27. By Degrees, it is come to fignify, in most of the Countries throughout the whole World, the Performance of every thing almost, except Virtue and Charity; and particularly, a punctual Exactness in a Regard to particular Times, Places, Forms, and Modes, diversified according to the various Humours of Men; recommended and practifed under the avowed Name of External Religion: Two Words, which, in the Sense fix'd upon them by many Christians, God bath put afunder; and which therefore, no Man should join together. And accordingly, the Notion of a Religious Man differs in every Country, just as much as Times, Places, Ceremonies, Imaginary Austerities, and all other Outward Circumstances, are different and various: Whereas in truth, tho' a Man, truly Religious in other Respects, may make use of such Things; yet, they cannot be the least part of his Religion, properly so call'd, any more than his Food, or his Raiment, or any other Circumstance of his Life.

THU s likewise, the Worship of God, to be paid by Christians, was, in our Saviour's time, and in his own plain Words, the Worship of the Father in Spirit and Truth; and this declared to be one great End proposed in the Christian Dispensation: The Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. John iv. 23. But the Notion of it is become quite another thing: and in many Christian Countries, that which still retains the Name of the Worship of God, is indeed the Neglect, and the Diminution of the Father, and the Worship of other Beings besides, and more than the Father. And this performed in such a manner, as that any indifferent Spectator would conclude, that neither the Consciences nor Understandings of Men, neither Spirit nor Truth, were at all concerned in the matter; or rather, that they had been banish'd from it by an express Command. In the mean time the Word, or Sound, still remains the fame in Discourse. The whole Lump of indigested and inconfistent Notions and Practices, everything that is folemnly faid, or done, when the Worship of God is profess'd, is equally cover'd under that general Name; and, by the help of uling the same Original Word, passeth easily for the Thing itself. Again, fatters as took their I'd PRAYER

Ir is a fad and scandalous thing to see the Disputes of the Learned, who grow warm and quarrel about the Sense of an antient Author. Is it reasonable that Men of Letters should inveigh one against another with the greatest Fury, because they ascribe a different Sense to Horace, Juvenal, &c? Is it reasonable that those who glory in loving humane Learning, and mak-Humaniores ing it their beloved Study, should be the Litera. most unpolite of all Men? To say that Homer made a certain Allusion, is to be a Visionary: Not to perceive that Allusion, is to want common Sense. The Poet had such a Thought: no body did ever observe it before. Does such a Discovery deserve that a Man should give notice that he is the Author of it, and commend his great Penetration upon that account?

I DON'T

PRAYER, in all our Lord's Directions about it, and particularly in that Form which he himself taught his Followers, was a calm, undisturbed Address to God, under the Notion of a Father, expressing those Sentiments and Wishes before Him, which every sincere Mind ought to have. But the same Word, by the help of Men, and voluminous Rules of Art, is come to signify Heat and Flame, in such a manner, and to such a degree, that a Man may be in the best Disposition in the World, and yet not be devout enough to pray: And many an honest Person hath been perplex'd, by this means, with Doubts and Fears of being uncapable of Praying, for want of an Intensenses of Heat, which hath no more relation to the Duty, than a Man's being in a Fever hath to the Sincerity of his Professions, or Addresses to any Earthly Prince.

AND the Notion of the Church of Christ, which, at first, was only the Number, small or great, of those who believed Him to be the Messiah; or of those who subjected themselves to Him, as their King, in the Affair of Religion, having fince that Time been so diversified by the various Alterations it hath undergone, that it is almost impossible fo much as to number up the many inconsistent Images that have come, by daily Additions, to be united together in it: Nothing, I think, can be more useful, than to confider the same thing under some other Image, which hath not been so much used, nor consequently so much defaced. And fince the Image of His Kingdom is that under which our Lord himself chose to represent it; we may be sure that, if we sincerely examine our Notion of his Church, by what he saith of his Kingdom, that it is not of this World, we shall exclude out of it, every thing that he would have excluded; and then, what: remains will be true, pure, and uncorrupted.

I DON'T pretend that because those Matters are of no great Importance, they ought to be fuperficially minded, and that a Man may publish his idle Fancies upon those Subjects without any Scruple. It would be a fatal Habit; and from the classic Authors it might reach the holy Scripture. Whatever we do, must be done wisely and attentively, and for that very reason without Pride, and without a Defign of raifing ourselves above others, either when we are pleased with our own Opinions, or when we examine the Opinions of other Men.

VIII. ETYMOLOGIES do not afford How to know a fafe Rule to discover accessory Ideas anaccessory Ideas. nexed to an Expression; for a Word loses by Benedicere. degrees its original Sense. To bless, in its Origin, fignifies to fpeak well of fomebody;

but, according to Use, it fignifies to wish well, or even to do good. To salute, in its Origin, is to wish the Preservation of a Man; but, ac-Salutare, Salutem optare. cording to Use, it is to perform a Civility; 'tis almost nothing; 'tis a mere Grimace.

I have heard a very grave Man, who in order to condemn Diversions, fetched his Proof from the Etymology of that Word. To divert one's felf, faid he, is to turn away, to go from one's Aim, to act foolishly. Others add, that a Man is willing to divert himself, because he is willing to turn away from himself, and afraid of seeing himself. Would a Man, say they, when he is pursued, (as we are by Death and its dreadful Consequences) amuse bimself to look upon Flowers?

THO' Diversion should be defined a turning away, yet it would be true that if a Man may turn away from Good, he may also turn away from Evil, and have recourse to Amusements only to divert his Illness and his Passions. You are indisposed: Think of it as little as you can: 'tis one of the best Remedies. You have been vexed: Forget your Vexation by fixing your Thoughts upon other Subjects; those forts of Wounds are quicker and better consolidated in Joy than in Grief. You are tired with ferious Meditations; those Thoughts follow you against your Will: Divert your Attention from them by some Amusement. But here is the Caufe of those strained Resections: A Man draws up a Scheme of Devotion contrary to Reason; and then the Voice of Nature, which constantly teaches us to live according to what we are, appears a dangerous Voice.

Voice, and a Man thinks himself obliged not to hearken to it.

THE Signification of some Words is so settled by Use, that the accessory Idea is the first which they raise, and by that means it becomes, as it were, the principal Idea. At the hearing of these Words, Sermen, Preacking, the first and principal Idea that is raised, is that of a Sacred Thing, of an Act of Devotion.

BECAUSE all Languages are not equally copious, some afford upon the same Subject as many Terms as there are accessory Ideas annexed to it; and it will not be possible to express those Terms in another Language, but by Circumlocutions, whereby their Force and Beauty will disappear (L)

WE need only read Authors with Attention to know. the Force of their Terms, and the Genius of their Language: They will continually afford Examples of what I have just now faid. Seneca, (m) for Instance, raises this Objection; When we complain of an ungrateful Man, or ask a Service of a Man to whom we have done one, don't we shew that we lend a Benefit which should have been gratuitous? Seneca answers, No; for I don't require; I only ask: nay, I hardly ask; I only put in mind. That Gradation, Non exigo, sed repeto; & ne repeto quidem, sed admoneo: I say, that Gradation, and the very nature of the thing, plainly flew, that the Word to require has a much greater Force than the Words to demand again. We require from a Man what we may force him to do: We ask what we can only obtain with his Good-Will. In like manner,

⁽¹⁾ Mira in quibusdam rebus verborum proprietas est: & confuetudo sermonis antiqui quædam esticacissimis, & ossicia docentibus, notis signat. Sic certè solemus loqui: Ille illi gratiam retulit. Referre, est ultrò quod debeas afferre. Non dicimus, Gratiam reddidit. Reddunt enim, & qui reposcuntur, & qui inviti, & qui ubi libet, & qui per alium. Non dicimus, Reposuit benesicium, aut solvit; nullum enim nobis placuit, quod æri alieno convenit, verbum. Referre, est ad eum à quo acceperis, serre. Hæc vox significat voluntariam telationem. Qui retulit, ipse sesse appellavit. Sen. Ep. LXXXI.

⁽m) Cùm bono viro beneficium do, sic do, tamquam numquam repetiturus, nisi necesse fuerit.—— Sed ex beneficio, inquit, creditum facis, Minimè: non enim exigo, sed repeto: & ne repeto quidem, sed admoneo. Sen. de Ben. Lib. V. cap. 20 & 21.

manner, when Seneca fays, that there is a great Difference between Obstacles and Hindrances: Multum interest utrum aliquid OBSTET tantum, an IMPEDIAT: that Opposition teaches us, that if an Obstacle stops us, as well as a Hindrance, and if they agree in that respect, yet they differ, because an Obstacle requires only Endeavours, whereas a Hi drance makes them useless.

THE same Seneca says, A Man is come Ep. XXXIX. to the Height of Misery, when not only he amuses himself, but is also pleased with what he should be ashamed of. And there is no Remedy left, when what was at first a Vice, is converted into Manners. TUNC autem consummata est infelicitas, ubi turpia non solum delectant, sed etiam placent: & desinit esse remedio locus, ubi que fuerant vitia, mores sunt. 'Tis plain that to please implies to approve; and that Manners are an Effect of a rooted Habit, which is grown natural. When the same Writer says, that we never get out of Error; that we always believe, but never judge; and that we undo ourfelves by following Examples that are given us; 'tis plainthat to believe is to follow Authority, and to judge is to yield to Reason (n).

IX. A

Cicero (de Invent. Lib. 11.) gives us formal Definitions of many Words; Religionem, eam quæ in metu & ceremonia Deorum sit, appellant: Pietatem, quæ erga patriam, aut parentes, aut alios fanguine conjunctos officium conservare moneat : Gratiam, quæ in memoria & remuneratione officiorum, & honorum, & amicitiarum observantiam teneat : Vindicationem, per quam,

⁽n) Tritissima quæque via, & celeberrima, maxime decipit. Nihil ergò magis præstandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu, sequamur antecedentium gregem, pergentes non quà eundum est, sed quà itur. Atqui nulla res nos majoribus malis implicat, quam quod ad rumorem componimur: optima rati ea, quæ magno affensu recepta sunt, quorumque exempla nobis multa sunt: nec ad rationem, sed ad similitudinem vivimus. Inde ista tanta coacervatio aliorum super alios ruentium. Quod in strage hominum magna evenit, cum ipse se populus premit, nemo ita cadit, ut non alium in se attrahat : primi exitio sequentibus sunt : hoc in omni vità accidere, videas licet : nemo fibi tantummodo errat, sed alieni erroris causa & auctor est. Nocet enim applicari antecedentibus: & dum unusquisque mavult credere, quam judicare, nunquam de vita judicatur, semper creditur: versatque nos & præcipitat traditus per manus error, alienisque perimus exemplis. Sen. de Vit. Beat. cap. I.

IX. A MAN who understands Latin and French, might compose a Discourse in one of those Languages; and a German, who understands neither of them, but can knowing it. read and write Latin and French Words,

How a Man can speak exactly, without

might translate that Discourse with the Help of an exact and very large Dictionary: His French Translation would contain the whole Sense of the Latin Text: Those who understand both Languages, would know it; but the Tranflator would know nothing of it. Let us apply this Example: A Man has so good a Memory that he remembers what he has read or heard, without understanding it at all, or but very imperfectly; but he may speak to a Man who will understand what he fays much better than himself. A bold, but an ignorant Orator, is to pronounce a Discourse upon a certain Subject, which he never studied. He has Books given him, and is advised how to use them: He takes some Passages out of those Books, and puts them together. Some of his Hearers are more sensible of the Strength of his Discourse than himself: they know that what he fays is well proved; but he knows nothing of it. Indeed 'tis but feldom that a Man can fucceed in putting together Words, which he does not understand. The Language of Men is too imperfect, most of their Expressions are too ambiguous to make a right Contexture out of them. One must necessarily be intent upon Things, to Vol. II. E

quam, vim, & contumeliam defendendo, aut ulciscendo propulsamus à nobis, & à nostris, qui nobis esse cari debent, & per quam peccata punimus: Observantiam, per quam ætate, aut lapientia, aut honore, aut aliqua dignitate antecedentes reveremut & colimus: Veritatem, per quam damus operam ne quid aliter, quam confirmaverimus, fiat aut factum, aut futurum fit.

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Non enim pudendo, sed non faciendo id quod non decet, impudentiæ nomen effugere debemus. De Orat. Lib. I.

Quem enim nos ineptum vocamus, is mihi videtur ab hoc nomen habere ductum, quod non sit aptus, idque in sermonis nostri consuetudine perlate patet. Nam qui aut tempus quid postulet, non videt, aut plura loquitur, aut se ostentat, aut corum, quibuscum est, vel dignitatis, vel commodi rationem non habet, aut denique in aliquo genere aut inconcinnus aut multus est, is ineptus effe dicitur. Lib. II.

Cum duo genera fint facetiarum, alterum æquabiliter in omni fermone tusum : alterum peracutum & breve : illa à veteribus Superior, Cavillatie: hac altera Dicacitas nominata est. Ibid.

correct the continual Absurdities which would arise from a

mere Collection of Words.

THE Language of Mathematicians being more exact, their Expressions less ambiguous, and their Signs more determinate, it is very frequently fufficient to mind only the Signs, and to combine them according to certain Rules, in order to come at last to a true Conclusion, with the help of a long Operation, attended with no manner of Light. This is what happens every day to those who have learned Geometry and Arithmetic only by rote. Nay, Mathematicians of a very different Order are sometimes so taken up with a long and painful Calculation, that they lose the fight of the Subject upon which that Calculation runs: They transpose, blot out, and substitute the Signs one to another, and after many Rambles in the Dark, they come to a Formule, which contains itself a new Problem. That Formule expresses a Figure unknown to them: it must be looked for and gueffed at; and 'tis only after the finding of it that they fee clearly, and that Ideas fucceed Words. Before they come to that, they confess their Knowledge does not reach to Things, and that they have only the Signs of them; which is the reason why they call that Knowledge Symbolical; and it is only instructive, when the Sight of Things succeeds the Sight of their Signs.

THAT Method is useful; but it is also liable to Inconveniences. It cannot be denied, that by that Means a Man uses himself to Obscurity, to be without Ideas, at least for a Time, and to be contented with Signs, the very Sense of which he does not perceive. If we follow that Method in Matters more liable to Errors arifing from Ambiguities, we fhall be generally mistaken about them. Tho' Mathematicians be never fo exact, yet it happens fometimes that they fall into Paralogisms. When, in a long Demonstration, they are not always guided by Light, if they take but one Word in a quite different Sense from that which they should have given it, the Error of that Ambiguity will appear in the remaining part of their Reasoning. pretended Demonstrations of a perpetual Motion, and of the Quadrature of the Circle, hitherto proposed with fo much Confidence, did always contain some Ambiguity of that nature, which was not perceived by the Author, because in some part of the Demonstration he was wholly taken up with the Words, without minding the Things.

WHEREFORE certain Combinations of Notes cannot perfectly convince us of the Truth of a Conclusion. We

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kannot be fure of it, but according as we join the intuitive Knowledge of the Things themselves to the symbolical Knowledge of the Notes.

X. A CHOICE of clear Words, full of accessory Ideas, makes true Eloquence, or Of Eloquence. doubtless the principal Part of it. True E-

loquence is the Perfection of Language; and fince the Language is defigned to convey our Thoughts into the Minds of others, a clear Language, the most proper for that End, is also for that very reason the most perfect. All other Advantages, if they concur with this, contribute to Eloquence; but when they prejudice Clearness, they are only false Ornaments. A Discourse may be excellent with Clearness only; but without Clearness it is good for nothing. So says a great Master (1). To speak without being understood, is to abuse the most excellent of our Faculties (1).

IF a Man defigns not only to instruct, but also to move the Hearer, Words full of accessory Ideas well chosen, and placed with Judgment, are very proper to produce that Effect, fince there is nothing more affecting than a great number of Ideas, revived by one single Word in a Mind

already disposed to entertain them easily.

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To that true Eloquence a false one is opposite, which teaches nothing, or moves the Mind without instructing it. When a Discourse is composed of Expressions so neat, so just, so well chosen, and so well placed, that nothing offends the Ear, and tires the Attention, that we hear it with Pleasure from the Beginning to the End, and understand the Things themselves without any Dissiculty; such a Discourse is full of a true and commendable Eloquence. But when by the Novelty of the Turns and Expressions, by the Cadence of Phrases and Periods, by the Pomp of great Words and a heap of Figures, a Discourse takes up the Ear and the Imagination to such a degree, that we forget to mind the Things themselves annexed to those Words; that pretended Eloquence is only admired by Fools; and

(p) Nonne fatius est mutum esse, quam quod nemo intelligat dicere? Cic. Philip. III.

⁽o) Omne quod de re bona dilucide dicitur mihi præclare dici videtur, quasdam autem res ornate dicere velle puerile est, plane autem & perspicue expedire docti & intelligentis viri. Cu. de Fin. bon. & mal. Lib. III.

to prefer it to a true Eloquence, is the same as if one should admire the Gambols of an Ape more than the regular Motions of a Man. That false Eloquence is contrary to the End of Speech, which has been established to lead us to the Knowledge of Things: it diverts us from them, by amusing the Mind, and fixing it upon Words.

XI. Most People being fond of those
A figurative
Style.

XI. Most People being fond of those
Things, which please their Senses and their
Imagination; Orators, in order to gratify
that Inclination, made use of Metaphors

and a figurative Style. That Style, which confifts in offering a thing to the Mind under the Image of another, was also very convenient to those, who being to defend a bad Cause, found it necessary to amuse their Hearers, to impose upon them, and divert them from the Consideration of the Subject in question, in order to fix their Minds upon another Subject, somewhat like, but at the same time so different as to deserve another Decision. When an Orator supposes some things to be perfectly like, tho' they are so only in part, he easily obtains that what has been decided about one of them, should be looked upon as decided about the other.

Some Expressions, metaphorical in their Origin, are grown so clear and so determinate by Use, that we apprehend their true Sense immediately, without thinking of their Origin; and such Expressions ought to be accounted literal. To be uneasy, to be quiet, to be calm, to excite one's self, to suspend one's Judgment, to see clearly an Idea in another, are Expressions of that nature. When we hear them, we no more think of their Origin, than a Man, who does not understand Greek, thinks of the Origin of the Word Idea, which in that Language signifies Image, Representation, Appearance.

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I HAVE already mentioned a Preservative against Mistakes arising from Metaphors and Comparisons. We shall remove their Obscurity, we shall avoid judging of what is unknown to us, we shall not make the same Judgment of two different things, if we change metaphorical Expressions into plain and literal ones; and if we forbear believing that we know Things, till we have changed their

Expressions, and brought them to that Simplicity.

A FIGURATIVE Language not only occasions Obfcurity in the Mind of the Hearer, because by offering a Thing under the Image of another, it hinders him from forming a just Idea of it; but besides it leaves the Mind e

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void of Ideas, and confequently in the dark, because frequently instead of raising Ideas, it raises only Sensations and Emotions. When we are extraordinarily moved, the usual Style does not appear to us to answer sufficiently our inward Agitations. In order to make the Hearers sensible of our Emotion, we have recourse to an extraordinary Style; and the Hearers will judge of it as we do, if they look upon it, not as an Expression of our Ideas, but only as a Sign of our Sensations and Emotions. Perhaps this Remark will afford a very easy and natural Explication of a Passage in the Scripture, which has hitherto appeared very difficult. St. Paul fays, he could wish Rom. ix. that he were accurfed for his Brethren. Interpreters are at a loss to know what Idea is to be annexed to that Word; but perhaps that Apostle used such a strong Expression only to shew the Vehemency of his Compassion for the Jews. It this Conjecture be true, that Word must be looked upon only as a Sign of a great Emotion, which has nothing in it that is clear but its Force, and a lively Sente of the Trouble occasioned by that Emotion. Perhaps 'tis also by an Effect of a like Perturbation of Mind, that the same Apostle, being wholly taken up with the Confideration of his former Sins, and hardly minding the Sins of other Men, declares that he is the chief of Sinners. For fince he was not the 1 Tim. 1. worlt of all Men, the Judgment he makes of

himself could not be a Consequence of clear Ideas; it was only the Language of Passion. When a Principle is right,

and the Emotions arising from it produce a good Effect, an Excels of a thort Continuance does not make them unlawful.

Ir appears from what has been faid, that a figurative Style is not the most proper for Instruction: It leads easily into Error, and consequently ought to be suspected. tho' its Effects be never fo dangerous, yet it would be wrong to conclude that we can be without it. An Orator ought to move as well as to instruct. Our Knowledge, the' never so clear, has but an imperfect Power, unless it be supported by our Passions. Wherefore it is very proper to convince the Hearers in the first place, and to use a plain and just Style, in order to enlighten the Mind with clear Ideas. But when the Mind is determined by Evidence, Care ought to be taken to win the Heart, and stir the Pasfions by lively Images, and a Brightness proper to captivate a Nature which would frequently run into Evil by a mechanical E 3

chanical Motion, if that Mechanism was not directed to Good.

I Don't pretend that a Discourse should be always divided into two general Parts; the first whereof should be only a Contexture of fimple and dry Demonstrations, deriving their Beauty from mere Evidence; and that the other be full of Figures, pompous Words, and vehement Passions, Those different Characters could not continually succeed one another without an Air of Affectation; and the fecond Part always bright would be the less moving, because it would be constantly expected. In order to win the Heart, an Orator must vary his Subject, and surprize the Hearer, and according to the Nature of the Things he treats of, mix, more or less, Images with Evidence, and support, more or less, the Simplicity of the Arguments, by the Force of Figures. Lastly, upon a Subject already known, he may fpeak to the Heart, without applying himself to the Mind.

IT is difficult for a Man to express himself in a plain Style about Things, in which he is very much concerned. We are pleased to see that his Heart dictates his Expressions. Passion is very becoming, when the Subject requires it; and we should have a mean Notion of an Author, who proposes coldly what deserves to be set forth with great Vivacity (9). But the most interesting Subjects are those, about which we ought chiefly to stand upon our Guard against Error; and therefore they ought to be examined with the greatest Caution. In order to facilitate that Examination, it is necessary to strip a Difcourse of all its Ornaments, Metaphors, Antitheses, &c. They must be laid afide, and the plainest Expressions must supply their Place: When we are upon fuch an Examination, we ought to remember the following Maxims:

Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri. Que veritati operam dat oratio, incomposita debet esse & simplex. SEN. Ep. XI.

WHEN

⁽⁹⁾ Hoc unum plane tibi approbare vellem, omnia me illa fentire quæ dicerem : nec tantum fentire, fed amare. Sen. Ep.

Non mehercules jejuna esse & arida volo, qua de rebus tam magnis dicentur: neque enim Philofophia ingenio renunciat.

Hæc sit propositi nostri summa : quod sentimus, loquamur quod loquimur, sentiamus. Ibid.

WHEN Truth is to be demonstrated, it wants no Ornaments; they would be prejudicial to it: The plainest

Expressions are the most proper to teach it.

The greatest Confusion in this Matter consists in exciting only Sensations, when Men are to be instructed, and using only Ideas, when they are to be moved. If instances of that Confusion were scarce, I would not have mentioned it; but we see every Day some Men, who undertake to convince the Mind with Metaphors and Figures, and to move the Heart with Arguments and Syllogisms. A Man, who grows warm, and indulges his Imagination, when he is to prove, will say extravagant Things; and he who argues in cold Blood, when he ought to stir the Heart, will not affect the Hearers in the least.

All. When each Term of a Discourse of Nonsense. has a Sense, and all the Words joined together have none, we call it Nonsense. Men are frequently imposed upon by it in sublime and difficult Matters, and they impute to the Greatness of the Subject, and to their Want of Capacity, an Obscurity, which is much more owing to the Ignorance and Presumption of the Author.

Shall I make bold to alledge fome Instances of it?

THE Creature has neither Existence, nor Substance, without partaking of the uncreated Reality.

THE Creator can create nothing without uniting it ef-

Centially to all his individual Reality.

THE immense Creator, having an infinite Relation to his Creature, it cannot be totally united to him, without corresponding indefinitely to his Immensity.

A FINITE Essence, partaking of Non-entity, must be

seasoned with it.

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am iat THE uncreated Truth, seeing that the Disorder of the Human Body disturbs the Operations of the Predestinated, makes them eat his own Body, to comfort their Organs.

ECCLESIASTICAL Orators do not sufficiently a-void that Fault in Ornaments, which they might very well let alone. They speak, for instance, of the dumb Voice of Conscience; they exhort us to hear it like the Voice of God, when it cries in a profound Silence.

THEIR Defign is doubtless to raise the Attention of the Audience by those Elegancies; but they do not confider, that whilst they desire to be heard, they contrive the

Matter fo that no Body understands them.

INCONSTANCY in Love is useful; for it keeps us in a kind of Love, which has its Apogaum, and preserves us from

from the Sublimity of a perfect Love, which however will always deprive us of the divine Pleasure of Reason.

THERE follows a long Piece of Nonfense.] BECAUSE Emotion, which makes Admiration, has no Affinity with the Idea, or Sentiment of the Object. I mean, that it is not merely a second Sensation, or Image of that Object; I conclude, that the Spirits do not strike upon it, and are not reflected in it with the same Modification

they had. However, because that Emotion is a more lively Sentiment, than that which I have of the Object that Arikes upon me, the Fibre from which they are reflected, must necessarily encrease their Motion; or the Spirits, which are reflected, must necessarily be strengthened by some other Stream, or those that are in the common Receptacle, which will go that Way. Now, tho' I acknowledge that the Elaflicity of the Fibre, upon which they have struck, imparts to them some Motion, and drives them, by a kind of Counterblow upon the Fibre, which lies open to their Angle of Reflection; yet I don't see how it can give them a sufficient Motion, that they may excite a Sentiment much more lively than the first; and an Emotion, which, tho' the strongest of all, yet is very fensible. Wherefore those Spirits, which are reflected from the Trace of the Object upon the opposite Fibre, must needs be helped by some other Cylinder or Stream of that spirituous Fluid. It will be either by those which return from the Organs, through the nervous Tubes, or by those, that are derived from the Glands and excretory Fibres of the Brain. The first Proposition is unwarrantable, since the Spirits returning from the Organs of the Senses against the Fibres of the Brain, would cocasion in it Ideas, or Sentiments of the Objects, by which they are driven, and not that Emotion: Therefore it cannot be occasioned by the Stream of the Spirits, which the Blood carries into the Brain, or which float in their Receptacle; and those Spirits being joined to the Cylinder of those, which the Impression of the new Object brings back, are reflected together against the opposite Fibre, where I have faid that the Emotion was connected by Nature. But because the Spirits, which fall from the excretory Fibres of the Brain upon that common Receptacle, diffuse themselves indifferently on all Sides, like all Fluids, they cannot move towards that Fibre, the Concussion whereof occasions the Emotion of the Soul, but in as much as they are determined to it by any Cause whatsoever. I see nothing that can determine them to it, unless it be this, viz. That the Spirits

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themselves, which flow back from the Organs, by the Impression of the new Object, and cut the Thread of those, that fall into the Emporium, change their Determination towards the aforesaid Fibre; or because flowing back throuble, that float in that kind of Bason, they make them wave jointly with them towards the Fibre to which they consine; or because the Trace and Bending which they form in their Point of Incidence, being very open and deep, those that are in the Receptacle tend to it, as towards the most sloping Part. Or lastly, because that Fibre, making violent and quick Motions in the midst of the Fluid with which it is watered, it impels it swiftly and plentifully against the Fibre opposite to it.

THE Winter, contrary to the Disposition of the Climate, began to resolve into Rain, by reason of a Northwind, which did continually blow, and quickly dispersed the unctious Exhalations of the Earth.

As the Calm of the Ocean is always uncertain in the Equinox, because some favourable Phænomena, which appear then in the Air, above the Surface of the Waters, do nevertheless receive, in that Season, all the occult and malignant Instuences, which are catable of putting them into Motion; in like Manner, the Tranquility which the Deference of the great Captain had almost forcibly inspired into the Catholic King, was of no long Continuance.

A GREAT Fortune, according to Plato in his Phædon, changes only in the Heart of Man those Passions, which Chance had introduced into it, or which the unlawful Conjunction of the Passions of two different Appetites, when they are grown excessive, had produced in it. Fortune does not affect those Inclinations, that are derived from Nature, but rather encreases them, by strengthening their Power, or affording them new Objects, by which they are unavoidably tempted.

MONTAGNE is full of Arguments of the like Nature: Not being very much concerned for Truth, he does not scruple to overthrow in one Line what he has advanced just before another. If we will believe him, he speaks only to speak, rather than to persuade his Reader; and yet, in order to obtain something, he requires more than he would have, and uses Expressions, which say more than he thinks. Here sollows the Passage of that Writer, Book III. Chap. XI. If any one should mind my idle Fancies, to the Prejudice of the most pitiful Law, Opinion, or Custom of his Village, he would very much

wrong

wrong himself and me too. I speak of every Thing for Talking-fake, and I say nothing by Way of Advice. Nec me pudet, ut istos, fateri nescire, quod nesciam. I would not speak boldly, if I was to be believed. I answered a great Man, who complained of the Sharpness of my Admonitions: When I see you bent upon a Thing, I propose enother to you as carefully as I can, not to bind your Judgment, but to clear it : God will direct your Choice. I am not so presumptuous as even to desire, that my Opinions bould have such Weight. Certainly I have several Opinions, from which I would diffuade my Son, if I had one.

CHAP. XII. Most of our Opinions are taken from Authority, and upon Trust: There is no Harm in it: We cannot make a worse Choice, than when it proceeds from our-Celves, in fuch a weak Age as ours is. We approve the Difcourses of Socrates, delivered to us by his Friends, only out of Respect for the Approbation of the Public: It is not out of Knowledge: They are not fuited to our Uje: If any fuch Thing should now happen, few Men would value it.

Bur how can we know that we make a happy Choice, in preferring the Taste of the Ancients to that of our Age, but by comparing them together with a free and impartial Mind? Can there be a more certain Sign of a good Discernment, than to acknowledge that we are inferior to others, the' fuch a Confession does by no Means agree

with Self-love?

WHEN a Man does not fufficiently understand the Matters he treats of, he is apt to fay nothing, tho' he pretends to fay a great deal; which is the Reason why Authors do frequently speak Nonfense, when they recommend a Virtue: And yet there is no Subject that requires a greater Justness of Thought. Some fall into Superstition, and othere into Irreligion, when more is required from them

than they ought to do.

THERE are few moral Subjects, that have been fo frained, and made so unintelligible, as Humility. When we read Discourses composed upon that Matter by Authors, whose very Name seems to deserve that we should be prepossessed in their Favour, we wonder that we do not understand them; we think we are dull, or ascribe our Ignorance to the Difficulty of the Subject: But at last we begin to fee; and we dare believe that the Authors themselves say nothing; and that if there is any Sense in what they fay, they are mistaken and contradict themselves. I have read more than once with Amazement, what a very great Man,

Man, for whose Name and Writings I have a due Refpect, has published in a small Chapter upon Humility, easily confounded with Self-love (r).

DOES

(r) Humility does not shew itself. An humble Man never speaks of himself, or he does it more indifferently than if he was to speak of others.

Those who have heard the two greatest Captains of this Age discourse of War, have always been wonderfully pleased with their Modesty. No one did ever observe that they said any Thing that might be suspected of Vanity. They always did Justice to others, and not to themselves; and when they described the Battles, in which they had the greatest Share by their Conduct and Valour; one would have thought, they had not

been engaged in them, or that they had been inactive.

If we read the Relation published at Paris, after the Battle of Senef, we shall find that great Action half lessened. One would think the Prince was a mere Spectator: He was every where, and yet he hardly appears any where; and there never was any Thing so much kept in the Dark, as his Share in the Success of that Battle. I fancy, that if St. Lewis put out some Relations of what he did in Egypt, they were like that: So great an Affinity there is between Holiness and Modesty in their outward Actions! There is but one Difference between them: Holiness is affected with the Injustice of Vanity in relation to Go D, and Modesty is moved with its Meanness in relation to Men. Essais de Morale, 3 Vol. 2 Treatise, Ch. V. pag. 129. Hague 1685.

Varillas makes too great a Figure in that kind of Writing, not to give a Specimen of it. The Intention of the Catholick King in the Management of a Truce, confifted in two subordinate Ends, which kept between themselves that kind of Proportion, which is the Foundation of Morality, to distinguish in the same spiritual, and consequently indivisible Action, two Sorts of Mo-

tions, one of which is near, and the other remote.

I cannot bear, fays he, that the great Name of Gonfalvo should be introduced into the last Apartment, in which Plato lodged Brutality. If I was willing to use the Discussion which Morals suggest, when each Virtue is to be known in particular; I would say, that the Action of the great Captain did truly proceed from the Virtue of Generosity, not in a formal manner, as it is called in the Style of Schools; but by an Action which is said to be commanded in the same Style: That is, tho' it was derived from a nearer Source, and owed its Original to the Concourse of an Object, a Motive, and a Term, which were not altogether the same as those, which afford an Employment proper for Man, as he is magnanimous; yet it was with respect to him, in a Dependence, which I cannot better denote, than with respect to that, which subjects the Appetite to the Will in all its Actions.

Does a Man cease to be an humble Man, when he has fome good Qualities? Does he cease to be a modest Man, when he is sensible of those Qualities? Does he want Modesty, because he loves to perform his Duty? Is there any Pride in believing, that there is nothing fo commendable as that Performance? Why should a Man be fuspected of Vanity, because he has done great Things, or because he mentions them upon Occasion. Why should we fancy that if he forbears proclaiming what is to his Glory, 'tis a refined Ambition r It may be that a great Man does not fo far despise his Inferiors, as to be unconcerned in what they think of him; but because their Approbation is not the main Thing, with which he is taken up, he does not mind it, when he speaks: He is satisfied, because he has done what he thought it was his Duty to do; and he is not fond of Praises, which were not his chief Aim. A Man is humble and modest, when he does not value too much his good Qualities, and when they do not appear to him fo great as they are, and fo great as they appear to others, because he is more desirous to improve his Merit than to be proud of it.

A CELEBRATED Divine has writ two Volumes in Quarto, concerning the Hiftory of the Patriarchs, in which he has added to the fhort Account, which the Scripture gives of them, all the Uncertainties published upon that

Subject by the Learned.

In that Work he makes a fhort Commentary upon the first Promise, I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, &c, and in that Commentary he shews, that what was to be born of the Woman, to bruife the Serpent's Head, was to be God and Man, and to be born of a Virgin (s). I will by no means dispute with him about it. I will not enquire whether Adam and Eve were able to

⁽s) Decimo cognoscere ex hoc verbo patres potuerunt, Christum fore Sedrepwrot. Nam femen mulieris non poruit effe non homo. - Rurium qui contrivit caput serpentis, debuit effe idem, qui posuit inimicitiam, JEHOVA. -- Undecimo quia semen, nempe sanctificans & patrator victoriæ, procedere debuit ad conterendum caput serpentis, divinarunt facili negotio patres, non nasciturum CHRISTUM; seut homo natus é muliere, Job XIV. & XV. 14. feu ex voluntate viri, communi nascendi forte. -Animadvertere igitur potuerunt CHRISTUM futurum effe filium Virginis, Pag. 88. the Will in all its Adlons.

understand thoroughly that short and metaphorical Promife, without the Help of the Event and of our Catechisms But when that learned Divine, in the Sequel of his Work, explains the Words spoken by Eve concerning her Firstborn, being willing that the Mother of Mankind should fay nothing upon that Occasion, but what is extraordinary, he fides with those, who pretend that Eve flattered herself to have brought forth the MESSIAS, and acquired a Man, who was also the Lor D himself; without remembring that he makes her forget that the MES-SIAS should be born of a Virgin, which he reckons a little before to have been the eleventh Article of her Belief. Thus fometimes an Author, out of a strong Defire of faying nothing but what is great, contradicts himfelt, and confequently fays nothing at all (t).

⁽¹⁾ Fagius, Forsterus, alii: Acquisivi virum Dominum, nempe semen illud, contriturum caput serpentis, Messiam promissum. Quæ etiam Kabbalistarum quorundam est explicatio. Et sanè tantum Evæ gaudium oftendit nihil vile illam expectaffe. P. 170.



CHAP. III.

Of simple and compounded Ideas, and of abstracted Ideas.

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E don't know immediately whatever is contained in a Subject: We form, in the first Place, an Idea of some of its Parts. To that first Idea we annex a second, to the second a third; and that Collection becomes the more compounded, as we encrease our

Knowledge. An Idea, which takes in many Ideas, is called compounded; and those that are contained in it, go by the Name of simple Ideas. gredients.

I. WE have very few Ideas perfectly Simple Ideas fimple; but, in a comparative Sense, we in a relative call those simple, that are less compounded; and we give that Name to those Ideas

that are united, with respect to those which result from

their Union. Thus the Idea of the Soul is simple with respect to the Idea of Man; the Idea of Salt, the Idea of Sulphur, &c. are fimple, with respect to the Idea of a

mixed Body, confifting of those Principles.

We take for simple Ideas those that are not so; and we join together those that are compound-

II. I HAVE already shewed more than once how necessary it is to proceed orderly from what is fimple to what is compounded. If we are miltaken in supposing a Collection, of which we have no Idea, 'tis because we make it too hastily, and do not take a fufficient time to know its Parts. We are also mistaken about several Subjects, in believing they are fimple, or much

less compounded than they are, because we denote them

by Words which imply no Composition (u).

ONE might give a great many Instances of it. Men fall into that Mistake almost about all the Acts of the Mind, and particularly about Passions. How many Acts, for instance, does the Word to love imply? To know, to esteem, to esteem with Pleasure, to dwell agreeably upon the Idea of the Person beloved, to be concerned for him, to wish him well, to congratulate him for the good Things he enjoys, to rejoice at it, to do him good, if it be possible, to have an eager Defire of pleasing him, to value his Esteem, to be fond of him, to make one's Happiness depend upon him, &c. And those Acts themselves are not absolutely simple: Sometimes all of them make up what we call Love; and sometimes that Act of the Soul contains only Part of them. It is absolutely necessary to make those Distinctions, that we may govern ourselves according to our Duty. In order to give each Object the Degree of Affection it deserves, we must know how far we ought to carry Esteem, Beneficence, the Defire of Pleasing, &c.

Nor only our Ideas, but also our Sensations are compounded; and we believe them to be fimple, when they are far from being fo. The Savour of a Ragoo feems to be as fimple as that of Sugar or Salt; but a Cook will diffinguish in it several Mixtures, and savour all the Ingredients. How many Differences will an experienced Physician

(u) Aristippus, in his Maxims about the Conduct of Men, did only mind the Body, and Zeno the Soul. There is nothing finer than to perform well the Part of a Man. Montagne, Book III. Chap. XIII.

Physician observe in the beating of the Pulse, which will appear simple to another? A Musician will discover many Sounds, when a Man, whose Ear is not exercised, fan-

cies he hears but one.

THE Word Body appears very fimple; and therefore it gives occasion to look upon a Body as a simple Being. And yet, if we consider it never so little, we discover in it an infinite Number of Parts; where we thought there was one Body, we find a numberless multitude of Bodies. Is therefore a Body no longer one fingle Substance? Yes, fay fome learned Men, even of great Note; but we don't know that Substance; we only know its Extension as the first Attribute; and that Attribute is very much compounded. Men, being used to look upon a Body as a fimple Being, are inclined to yield to that Supposition, tho' they get little by it, and the same Difficulty returns immediately; for, when a Body is broken into a thousand Pieces, and those Pieces are separated one from another, do they remain the Attributes of one and the same Subflance fimple and undivided? Befides, I ask, is an Extension but one Extension, or many Extensions? is it an Unity or a Multitude?

THE Word Motion is thought to be as simple as that of Body: Nay, it seems to be a greater Parodox to ascribe to it any Composition; and yet it is the Action of a Body which runs over an Extension; and in that Extension which it runs over, two Things are to be distinguished, from which its Quantity results, viz. its Base and its Length. We judge of the one by the Weight of the Body that moves; and the other is made Use of to measure

its Swiftness.

THE Force of Motion or its Quantity depends upon the Quantity of the Extension, which it runs over. That Force is one thing, and its Determination and Direction towards a certain Term is another thing. That Direction itself is not a simple Mode; for a Body in Motion removes at the same time from more than one Term, and comes nearer many Terms; and some of those Directions, or Approaches, may substift, when others cease. An Obstacle, inconsistent with one of them, will be no Hindrance to the others.

III. In those Instances, and a great many more, for want of considering that the arise several Signification of the Words is compounded, Missakes. and consequently that it may vary, we annex to them sometimes one Part of the Ideas which they repre-

fent,

fent, and fometimes another. From whence it happens, that Men don't understand one another, and think differently, tho' they use the same Expressions: Nay, one and the same Man does sometimes alter the Sense of his Words, without being aware of it; and from a Principle true in one Sense, he draws a Consequence, which supposes in that Principle a different Sense from that in which it is true. Thus, you will see some Men, who, either devoutly, or out of Interest, pretend that we ought to express for a Knave, especially when he seems to repent, the same Degree of Friendship and Confidence, as when we thought he was an honest Man; and to do him as much Good, under pretence that we ought to love our Neighbour as ourselves. That Precept does not command an Equality with respect to all the Acts contained in Affection. It would be an extravagant and even an impossible Thing to make no Distinction in our Esteem for Men, and to use no Preference in our Conduct and our Benefits. Some fancy we have no Love for them, when we are unwilling to do every Thing they defire; and, upon that Supposition, they charge with Injustice and Ungratefulness those very Men, who are concerned for them, and perhaps more than they should be.

WHEREFORE we must not fancy, like Children, that we know a Thing, because we know its Name. A Child fees a kind of a Stone, blackish, and not much unlike Iron, which attracts Needles: He is furprifed at it, and asks what is that wonderful Body? They answer him, it is a Loadstone: He is satisfied; for that Word is sufficient for him to talk of that Stone: And in general, the Wants of animal Life do not require a more exact Knowledge. When a Man has learned the Names of Things, he can talk about them, as much as he pleases, and knows how

to alk for them, whenever he defires it.

nimes one Part of the Ideas watch they repre-

Mos r People go no farther. One would be apt to believe that every Thing had its Name from a good Judge, and that the first Authors of the Expressions, that are now in use, were all very knowing Philosophers; so little Care is taken to examine the Signification of Words. Once more, Things ought to be studied with great Application, and with a reasonable Persuasion that most of them have been wrongly conceived and wrongly named. But I shall enquire in the IVth Part of this Treatise, in what Order Things ought to be studied.

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Ce In ed all at once, we should be very happy, and Abstraction.

Rules would be needless: it were but look-

ing upon those Objects which belong to the Senses, or fixing our Attention upon those Things that are the Objects of the Mind; and then we should have a full Knowledge of them: but no one did ever pretend to it. The human Mind proceeds by degrees, and knows one Part after another: 'tis an Imperfection, but 'tis a Necessity. That Manner of Thinking is called Abstraction, because one Part is taken from those with which it is joined, in order to be considered by itself.

V. Those Parts, those Attributes, in a word, those Realities, which are discover'd Formal Absone after another, may sometimes exist se-

parately: they are Substances; and then the Abstraction is easy. The Schoolmen call that fort of Abstraction formal; for sometimes they gave that Name to what they looked upon as principal. Now that Abstraction is the principal one, because it is the most necessary as well as the most easy. To come to the Knowledge of the Universe, we begin with one Part; and in that Part, as the Earth, for Instance, we consider many others by themselves, the Waters, the Oils, the Stones, &c. and in each of those mixed Bodies we consider the nature of the Salt, Sulphur, and Earth, &c.

VI. THERE is a Caution to be used in those Abstractions: We must not be con-

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tented to know a Subject, such as it is in itself, but we must also consider its Relations with all those
Subjects to which it is usually joined in acting, and also
the Disposition of those that are acted upon by it; for the
Power of a Cause does no less depend upon the Disposition
of those Subjects, than upon its own Activity. Tho' we
knew all the Parts, and the Configurations of all the Parts
of a Sudorisic, or a Purge, yet we should not be able to
know its Efficacy, without considering the Disposition of
the human Body, in which a great many Particles will facilitate its Operation. 'Tis like a Spark, which overthrows'
thick Bastions, by virtue of certain Principles contained in
a great Quantity of Gun-powder.

WE frequently seek in a Subject the Causes of some Properties which never leave it, but depend chiefly upon certain Agents external to that Subject. Gravity affords an Instance of it, if, as the Cartesians will have it, those Causes which determine Bodies to tend towards the Center of the Earth, are external to them. The Properties of Sounds are exactly expressed by Numbers; but the Reasons of Consonances and Dissonances have been in vain looked for in those Numbers; and some occult Virtues and a Sympathy with the Soul of Man, have been ridiculously ascribed to them.

WII. THERE is another Abstraction, modal Abcalled modal. We think in that manner, when we consider a Mode without considering the Substance of which it is a Mode;

when we endeavour to know a certain State, without confidering the thing of which it is a State; or when we are intent upon some Modes and States of a Subject, without minding its other Modes and States. Thus we confider the Nature of Motion, without confidering whether the Body that moves be large or small, of Wood or Stone, &c. We confider its Course and its Directions or Determinations, without minding its Force. The Narrowness of our Minds, which does not allow them to proceed but by degrees, makes also that fort of Abstraction very necessary; but it is one of the most frequent Occasions of Error, by reason of the Impersection of Languages.

VIII. SUBSTANTIVE Nouns are beflowed upon those Modes and States, consi-

dered abstractively, which gives occasion to look upon them as Substances, each of which may exist by itself as easily as they are considered separately. For Instance, when it is said that a Body imparts to another Body the third part of its Motion, and preserves two third parts of it, Motion is spoken of as if it was a Substance,

that may be divided into many others.

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To avoid those Mistakes, we ought to remember that a Mode is a Substance in a certain State; and when we know that Mode by Abstraction, we must return to that Way of Thinking which is called concrete, and consider the Substance itself, as it is modified in a certain manner, and as it happens to be in a certain State. For Instance, when I say that a Body is in motion, I mean that a Body moves, that it exists by applying itself successively, and that in a determinate Time, for Instance, two Minutes, it moves along a determinate Space, for Instance, two Toises.



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CHAP. IV.

A further Account of Abstractions, and of general and determinate Ideas.

HEN from fincere I derive Sincerity; from long, Length; from Man, Humanity; from Sincerity; from long, Length; from Man, Humanity; from Terms are Words are plainly abstracted. existent, Existence; those sallacious.

Abstratted

Others are no less so, but they do not appear so much to be so, and are sometimes used by Philosophers themselves, as if they were not abstracted. What do they not fay of Time for Instance? It is long, it is short, it runs away, it is not to be redeemed, it is subdivided into Parts, between which there is no Interval, but none of which can be the last Term of the Division; but on the contrary, is continually fubdivided. Philosophers dispute about its Nature: Some make it a Part of Eternity; And what do they not make of it? Because the Parts of Time are separated one from another, they gravely inter from thence, the necessity of a Reproduction and Creation continually renewed.

FROM thence they go farther; and conclude that a Body may be removed in one instant from Constantinople to Laufanne without going thro' the Medium; that is, without croffing the Space that lies between those two Towns. It is sufficient, say they, for such an incredible Effect, 1. That the Existence of that Body should cease at the same time as a Minute, which has undeniably a last Term in its Duration: 2. That it should be created at the Beginning of the next Minute, which has also a first Beginning, that does not depend upon the End of the preceding Minute, but touches it immediately and without any Interval. But when that Body has been annihilated at Constantinople at the End of a Minute, it is as easy, fince it does no longer exist, to create it, at the Beginning of the next Minute at Lausanne, as to create it at Constantinople. The Creator is equally every where; and what he is pleafed to create, has no relation to one Place more than to ano-VOL. II. F 2 ther,

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ther, and he will equally make it exist where-ever he pleases. Wherefore at the End of a Minute a Body ceases to exist at Constantinople, and at the Beginning of the next

it happens to be at Lausanne.

Bur if the Word Time is only the Name of an abstracted Idea, what will become of so many Speculations, and how necessary will it be to mend that Language? Time is a successive Duration: Every body acknowledges the Truth of that Definition. If some Men like other Definitions better, they believe them only to be more exact, but not truer. Now Duration is a continued Existence; Existence is the Thing itself that exists; for you do not hold two Things in your Hand, your Book and its Existence; but when you consider that Book only as existing, there arises in your Mind, which considers it thus by Ab-Araction, an Idea equally applicable to other Beings; but it is an abstracted Idea. The Time of a Thing is therefore that Thing itself, as it exists successively; that is, that Thing itself receiving some Variations, that Thing itself

differently modified.

THE Variations are different one from another, otherwife they would not be Variations; but the Substance modified by them does always equally remain a Substance: it undergoes feveral Changes: fome ceafe, and others arife; but as for the Substance, because it does not cease, it does not arise neither, and succeed itself. A Mode vanishes away; another takes its Place, and begins to exist; but the Substance does not vanish away with the first, and is not produced with the fecond. If a Substance was once annihilated, a fecond might arife like the first; but it would not be the first. The same ought to be said of Modes: When a Body ceases to move, I may give it a Motion equal to that which it had before; but it will not be the same. I shall restore to a Wax-Ball made flat a Roundness equal to that which it has lost; but it will not be the same, as the present Minute is not the same with the preceding one. Wherefore should a Body be produced at Laufanne, it cannot be the same with the Body just before annihilated at Constantinople. A Substance remains the same Substance by the Continuation of its uninterrupt-

A BSTRACTED Substantive Words, because Men are more fond of Words than of Things, made the Philosophy of the Schools a childish and extravagant System. All Bodies are not alike: Wherefore there is in them a Prinrong ciple

ciple of Conformity and a Principle of Difference. The first goes by the name of Matter, and the second by the name of Form. Which gives occasion to suppose two Substances, one of which is altogether imaginary. That pretended substantial Form has been dressed up with first and second Qualities. Entities, forged by Abstraction, were, according to those Philosophers, Accidents and Medes; but because they used them like Substances, and ascribed to them what does not agree to Modes, their Language was a heap of Contradictions, a perfect Nonsense.

THOSE Abstractions have also introduced into the Language of Men a great many Words to which no Ideas, or false ones, are annexed: Such are the Words Nature, Chance, &c. Nay, it may be said that Abstractions have afforded Idols to the Heathens. Valour, Prudence, Truth, &c. and not only Virtues, but also Vices, Passions, and Diseases, have been esteemed Deities: Temples have been

crected to Fear, &c.

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II. I T is therefore fometimes highly ne- A Rule.

ceffary to change Expressions full of abstracted Terms into others, which being more exact, occafion no Mistake. Thus, instead of saying, Walking is
wholsome, I shall say that a Man who walks, uses a proper Exercise to preserve his Life and his Vigour. Instead
of saying, that Truth meets those who look for it with a
sincere Application; that it seizes their Understanding;
that it enlightens them, and speaks to them inwardly; I
shall say, that a Man extremely desirous to know things,
and to apprehend them such as they are, when he is attentive and willing to think in a right Method, thinks after
such a manner as discovers to him what he desires to
know; and that his Perceptions represent things such as
really they are.

If you confider how some Men personify Truth, you would think they are afraid of being understood, and making others easily apprehend the Advice which they give to come to the Knowledge of Truth. If they think as they speak, and if they are in the right to think so, true Philosophy is nothing but a mere Enthusiasm. When things are really such as we conceive them, we are said to think right; and Truth consists in that relation of our Thoughts with those things which we believe we know. But because the general, abstracted, and relative Word Truth is a Substantive Noun, we speak of Truth as if it was a Substance. We say we must yield to it; which sig-

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nifies we must acquiesce in evident Ideas, and judge of things by them. We must consult Truth; which signifies that the Mind must be attentive to its Ideas, and apply itself to raise them. It must enlighten us. It is eternal; that is, a Proposition that is true to day was not false yesterday. From whence it is inferred, that Godonly being eternal. Truth is therefore God himself; and that way of speaking, GOD is the Eternal Truth, has given occasion to accuse, with no less Malice than Ridiculousness, those who are pleased with that Stile of understanding by the Word Godon a mere Idea, a Manner of Thinking, a mere Relation, and consequently of being downright Atheists.

THE greater those things are of which we speak, and the more they feem to deferve pompous Expressions, the more we indulge Words that have no Meaning, and which if they have any Sense in them, do frequently offer a fallacious one. What do not Men say every day concerning Nature? The most fashionable Language seems to make a Deity of her. I might collect upon that Subject a great many Expressions taken from all forts of Authors, which are strangely allegorical. They ascribe to her a very great Power, but a limited one; a great Dexterity, but confined within certain Bounds; and a Goodness which requires from us an Acknowledgment for the good things she atfords us; but at the same time she is represented as acting out of Self-Interest, whereby we are dispensed from shewing her any Gratitude for what she does not do upon our account, tho' we are the better for it: Nay, fometimes The is represented so mean as to conceal her Actions from us, and to frustrate the Endeavours we use to know her.

Philosophers have fometimes taken no small Pains to find out Reasons why Nature has given Passions to Men; nay, they have carried that Question so far as to ask, how it comes to pass that Nature thinks fit to make those Passions so lively, that they are most times excessive, and that Reason has much ado to confine them within due Bounds? But if Men express themselves more distinctly, they will be free from all those Perplexities. If by Nature we mean the State of the humane Body, and the Instunce of its Motions over our Thoughts, the natural Reason of the Cause of Passions will be easily understood. Violent Motions are attended with lively Sensations: Those Sensations make a much greater Impression upon us than Ideas; and it requires a great deal of Attention to be better pleased

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with the latter. But, if by the Word Nature we mean the Author of Man and of the World, that Question will still consist of two Parts; for it may be asked, why Go n thought fit to create Man liable to Passions? and how it comes to pass that he suffers Man to be exposed to Passions, which Reason does not prevent, and has frequently much ado to assuage?

Things, than to compose a System of abstracted Ideas; for we make Abstractions with a surprising Facility; and when we have disposed them in a certain Order, we are too well pleased with them to give them over

The Mind of Manistoo fond of Abstracti-.

are too well pleafed with them to give them over. We fancy that things are as we suppose them to be, and at last we

make no doubt of it.

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HEAT and Moistness, Heat and Dryness, Cold and Moistness, Cold and Dryness, form four Elements by their Combinations: Two of them are temperate, and the other two are excessive. The Earth is surrounded with Water; the Water is surrounded with the Air. Order must be carried on, as far as it can go; and to make Nature conformable to our Ideas, we must suppose a Sphere of Fire about the Air. The Heavens must be composed of a fifth Essence: There is some pleasure in multiplying Abstractions. Men form an abstracted Idea of the Soul by look ing upon it as a Principle of Life; and then by divertifying that abstracted Idea, they make three forts of Souls, the Vegetative, the Sensitive, and the Rational. The Soul either perceives only, or besides willeth. When it perceives, it receives Ideas, or torms them itself. Besides, it thinks either dependently upon the Senfes, or without their help. Thus it is divided into feveral Parts: Inferior Part, fuperior Part, active Understanding, passive Understanding, free Will, Spontaneity. Men talk of those Faculties as they would talk of the Arms and Legs of the Body; they suppose them to be almost as different.

IV. Our abstracted Ways of Thinking abstractions not only perplex our Speculations, but also are prejudicial have an ill Influence upon our Conduct. A is the Conduct Man who is going to play, has his Mind of Life.

not think of the Loss. He who chuses a Military Life, revolves nothing in his Mind but fine Cloaths, noble Entertainments, and great Titles; but he finds quite another thing at the Foot of a Rampart: And as for those who are

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above Fear, will they be Proof against the ill Humour of their Superiors; against the Disorder of the Seasons, and continual Hardship? They did not expect any such Inconveniency; for they considered the thing only on its fair Side. It happens but too often, that those who marry fill their Heads with Abstractions, and then are extremely surprized to find themselves unhappy by their own Fault.

THOSE who commit Crimes punishable with Death, run a great Hazard; but they do not consider the dreadful Consequences of those Crimes, that they may pursue a wretched Advantage, with which their Thoughts are only taken up: And how many People strip vicious Actions of their Guilt, by considering them in their mere Nature, without minding their Undecency, and the Disorders that may arise from them?

AFTER all, say they, what is such an Action, which is so much condemned? 'Tis an indifferent Motion; as if the Nature of an Action did constitute its whole Morality. That Morality is relative; and if we defire to know it, 'tis plain we must not be contented to judge of a thing

in it elf, and without confidering all its Relations.

THESE Expressions, but manely steaking, morally speaking, are derived from those abstracted Ways of Thinking: Nay, some People set natural Morality in opposition to the Gospel Morality. By which means they use themselves to remove from their Minds those things which Decency and Christianity require should be attended to; and they see nothing in an Action but what is agreeable to their Interest, or to some other Passion.

WHEN Aristotle says, that if the Art of Building was in the Timber, that Art would act like Nature, and we should see Ships grow as well as Trees, he tersinises the abstracted Ideas of Nature and Art, and expresses himself so metaphorically, that one can hardly understand what

he meant.

* Opinion governs the World. † Men are governed by Abstractions.

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It has been said, * Mundus regitur opinionibus: It may be as truly said, † Mundus regitur abstractionibus. Every body does his best to deserve the Application of the Fable of the Milk-pot. Men build Cassles in the Air; and when those Cassles fall to the Ground, they complain of their Unhappiness. Whoever designs to raise a solid

Building, must beware of Abstractions.

ABSTRACTIONS creep into and spoil the most serious Actions of our Lives. A Man is frequently devout, and communicates wrong, for Instance, because he communicates by Abstraction. He lays aside, for some days, fome Inclinations, which he has by no means given over, and will not fail to indulge again. Whereupon he is well pleased with himself, and receives the Communion with the fame Confidence as if he had actually renounced his Vices. He makes an Abstraction of his Passions and Intrigues; and by a kind of Forgetfulness he communicates as if he had no Miltress, no Avarice, no inveterate Hatred. The Abstraction being over, he finds himself such as he was before. A Man in Debt does the fame, who defires to appear well pleased, when he treats his Friends. A Man prays and communicates with his Enemies with the fame Dispositions as it he was eating with them at a Great Man's Table. The Mind being taken up with the Entertainment, will not diffurb it with Contestations. In fuch a Case, a Man for his own Quietness lays aside those Ideas which might revive his Anger; but as foon as the Entertainment is over, those Ideas return of themselves without any opposition (x).

WE observe in a Man certain Qualities we defired to find in him: Whereupon we are pleased with him, and do not consider his other Qualities, which make also part of his Character. Our hopes of him are grounded upon what we have been pleased to observe in him; and we cannot sufficiently wonder, when we are obliged to make an Abatement. But why did we make an arbitrary Com-

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On E of our most satal and inveterate Habits is thus to impose upon ourselves by Abstractions. Does a Man undertake any thing contrary to our Interest? We consider his Design on the most odious Side: We cannot see any thing that may lessen his Fault, and make it somewhat excusable. But if we are willing to procure to us some Advantage, our Abstractions take quite another turn: every thing that suits with our Interest, offers itself on a fair Side. Those who are not acquaint d with the World, or have not sufficiently studied humane Nature, cannot sufficiently wonder to see Men so unlike themselves, and make

⁽x) A time for Vice, and a time for GoD, as it were for a Compensation. Montagne, Book I. Chap. LVI.

fuch different Judgments about the fame Actions, when they are done by those who have different Relations with them.

THOSE Remarks afford a Key to explain the Language of most Men, and to avoid falling into Error by taking it in too literal a Sense. When they commend the Merit of a Man, you are only to infer from thence, that he is related to them, or in their Interest. He is an bonest Man. The Meaning of it is, He is my Coufin, or my Patron, or, He is one of my Creatures. When they tax any body with want of Wit and Probity, you must only conclude that he does not fide with them. When they complain of the Vanity and Ambition of others, 'tis only a Proof of their taking Umbrage at them, and being afraid

of their Superiority.

WHEN a Man is prepoffessed by a Passion, he seeks in an Object fomething that may favour it; and then Ab-Araction fixes the Mind upon it: he fees nothing else in that Object. A fingle Fault in a Man who is not loved, is fufficient to make all his Virtue of no effect. Nothing can be more unjust. The proud Oftracism of the Athenians was in fome Sense less to blame. Those who created fome Jealoufy among that ambitious People by their good Qualities, were only accused of too great a Merit, and obliged to leave a City, where too great an Unequality was odious to the Citizens. Their Lofs fell chiefly upon their Estates; but their Reputation, far from being blaited by it, was by that means confirmed by a public and unfuspected Approbation. There was in that Case more Sincerity and less Delusion, than in Abstractions so common among other Men, whose Meanness of Soul does always finish the Work which the Corruption of the Heart begins. When we hate a Man because his Sight makes our Vanity uneasy, or because he opposes our Interest, we fee nothing in him that is commendable; he has no Merit, no Virtue.

MEN raised to Preferments are more liable to that Fault than others, because looking upon their Elevation as a Proof of a distinguished Merit, they do not so much mistrust their Thoughts, and being used to be heard attentively, they cannot fo well bear a Contradiction. We fee but too many Instances of it in all the several Orders

of the Society.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur & extra. innie tor Con, as it were for a

Hor. Lib. I. Ep. II. 16.

An Ecclefiastical Dignity gives a great Power; but it requires also that a Man should be a Model of Humility. Here is a large Field for Abstractions. A Clergyman remembers constantly his Prerogative, but seldom thinks of his Duty.

THE Happiness of the People is much more the Defign of Temporal Dignities, than the Advantage of those who are raised to them, their Wealth, Interest, Luxury, &c. But a Man in those Circumstances pursues chiefly an acceffory End, and is contented to mind the principal one,

by the way, and out of Decency.

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As Men make Abstractions when they should avoid them, they make none when they are necessary. How comes a Mahometan to grow obstinate in his Errors? 'Tis because when he examines his Religion, he does not consider the Prejudices of his Birth, and the Interest which keeps him in that Religion. And how comes it that most Christians know their Religion so little? 'Tis because they never examine it without Prejudices. If the Principle which keeps the Mahometans in their Communion, is to blame; those Christians who are so merely out of Lazines, Interest, and Prepossession, lose all the Merit of the Profession they make of Christianity, by reason of such an unworthy Principle.

How comes it, that in relation to the public Good, as well as in point of Learning, Men will not be directed by the Knowledge of those who favour a different Party from theirs? They do not know how to lay aside useless Confiderations, in order to examine the Strength of Reasons.

MEN would reap a greater Benefit from Sermons, it they knew how to overlook the Weaknesses of Preachers and of their Compositions. When St. Austin recommended with great Zeal the love of Virtue and Piety, it would have been no less extravagant than unjust, to slight those Exhortations by reason of the Disorders of his Youth. But if a Synod had condemned fome of his Opinions, and he had been urged to condemn them himself, he would doubtless have bitterly complained of fuch a Constraint, and shewed the Injustice of it. But would any body have wondered, if the Arguments alledged by him against Constraint should have appeared weak, after all that he had faid to justify his hard Usage of those who did not think as he did? A Preacher naturally proud and captious, and who loves to domineer, must not wonder when he asfumes an Air of Dignity, and expresses himself with a Gravity

Gravity proper for the Pulpit, that his Hearers should think of his usual Haughtiness: It is no easy thing to forget it; his Presence, and even his Air, brings it into their Minds. Besides, the Harshness of the Style, unpolite Expressions, a disagreeable Tone, and affected Manners, must needs prevent the Effect of the best Arguments; for a Man cannot lay afide what he is actually fenfible of.

Some Abstractions are very useful. A Judge must lay afide Quality, Riches, Poverty, Recommendations, and the relations of Friendship and Enmity. A Reader must not mind the Name, the Country, nor the Protession of the Author whose Book he reads. Whatever is perfonal ought to be laid afide, in order to make a right Judg-

ment of things themselves.

THE Happiness of humane Life depends upon a good use of Abstractions. Most People do not consider their Faults, and are contented to be fenfible of their Merit; and therefore they preserve their good Qualities, without mending their Imperfections. But they do the quite contrary with respect to outward Advantages: they value what they have not, and are little fensible of what they have: Which is the reason why so few People are contented with their Condition. There is no State in this Life that is perfect in all respects. It is very proper to think of those Inconveniences that may be remedied; but those that cannot be prevented, ought not to be minded. We must be sensible of a good Success; but when any thing takes an ill turn, we must think of it only to grow more moderate in our Defires, more cautious in our Undertakings, and more prudent in their Execution.

BECAUSE the Success of an Undertaking does generally depend upon the Combination of a great many Circumstances, we must forget none, if it be possible, when we form a Project. We must study the Nature of those things we aim at, and reflect upon the Inconveniences, and not only upon the Advantages, that may arise from them. We must compare the Inconveniences and Disticulties with the Benefit we hope for, and with the Means that are in our Power. But in order to perform all those things, we must examine, whilst we are in cold Blood; whereas generally we begin with our Passions, which shut our Eyes against the Inconveniences, and fill us with Hopes: Which is the reason why we expect every thing,

and get nothing at all.

BECAUSE in Books we frequently explain some Property of a Subject, without confidering a great many others, with which it is generally attended ; it does not follow that fuch a Way of Thinking is peculiar to learned Men-It is very usual; and we need not wonder at it. There is nothing more fuitable to the nature of our narrow Minds than to be taken up with a fingle Idea, and to fix their Attention upon a fingle Side of an Object. There is nothing more common than the Words Motion and Time; but we have just now teen that those Words are, in the usual Language of Men, Names of abstracted Ideas. Perhaps the same may be faid of the Word Space. The Idea of Extension is equally applied to all the Bodies that are feen or imagined: We frequently think of the Extension of a Body, without minding its other Properties. If some Philosophers tancy that there is an Extension, distinct from Matter, it may be they suppose a determinate Object, which answers a general and abstracted Idea, without containing any thing more than what it offers.

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V. WHEN confidering some Attributes of a Subject, we form an Idea of them Of general and equally applicable to others, that Idea is determinate called general; and that Way of Thinking Ideas.

goes by the name of universal Abstraction.

A determinate Idea is opposite to a general Idea; and those Words are more relative than absolute: For our Ideas being the more determinate as they are less general, and the more general as they are less determinate, an Idea is general with respect to a second, and determinate with respect to a third. The Idea of Triangle is general with respect to the Equilateral, the Isosceles, and the Scalenum; but it is determinate with respect to the Idea of Figure. The Idea of Tree is general with respect to the Apple-Tree, the Elm, &c. but it is determinate with respect to the Idea of Plant. A general Idea is a felf-concious Act; it is a Modification of Thought; it is a Thought perceiving in a certain manner: It is therefore a determinate Act, and called general, not because it is so in itself, and because its Object is general; for nothing general does actually exist, and whatever Object a general Idea be applied to, it will always be a determinate Object. But that Object being like many others, the Idea which represents it is called general, because it is no less proper to represent the others in sadw i codesev to defend : I his is a hally Process

what they have a Resemblance with it, than to represent

that Object itself.

SOMETIMES a determinate Idea is added to a general Idea. When I fee a Tree afar off, and know not whether it be an Oak or a Chestnut-Tree, I have only the general Idea of Tree applicable to many kinds; that is, when I fee that Tree, I only think of some Attributes whereby it resembles others of a different kind. Yet because I see it standing in a certain Place, at such a Distance, &c. I am convinced that it is a determinate Object which actually exists, that it is a certain Tree, an individual Being. Wherefore my Idea is then a Compound of fomething general and fomething determinate.

nate Ideas.

VI. GENERAL Ideas are always a We must en- Sign of Imperfection. If our Knowledge deavour to was not limited, we should fee in every thing have determi- whatever is contained in it, and our Idea of it could not be applied to any other thing.

A perfect Intelligence knows all things in that manner. The more Attributes we know in a Subject, the more determinate is our Idea of it; and therefore our Knowledge increases as it is less general, and we should always endeavour to have determinate Ideas. Every thing that exists is determinate, and consequently our Ideas represent things the more exactly, as they are more determinate.

Mistakes occalioned by general Ideas.

VII. W E dwell upon general Ideas out of Lazinels: We grow weary of Labour: Being foon weary of our Inquiries, we rest fatisfied with the first Notions that offer them-

felves. Did we go no farther, we should only be in Ignorance; but from Ignorance we quickly fall into Error. We suppose that those general Ideas, to which we confine ourselves out of Ignorance and Laziness, are true Representations of things; and because we are senfible they do not discover them to us, we say they are obfoure Ideas.

WE go still farther in our Errors. From a general Idea we draw a determinate Conclusion, and so ascribe to Objects more than we fee in them. A Stone, that is not supported, descends: the same Thing happens to us: wherefore there is fomething common to us and the Stone; which is true in the general Idea. Therefore the fuspended Stone is in a violent State, and, by its Inclination, it has a Tendency to descend: This is a hasty Proceeding

to determinate Ideas. He labours constantly: therefore he is a covetous Man. He is tender of his Reputation; therefore he is an ambitious Man. He speaks freely: therefore he loves to be fatyrical. In all those Cases, Men, without a sufficient Knowledge, proceed from general to determinate Ideas. A prudent Man and a covetous Man are both sond of their Interest; a wise Man and an ambitious Man love Reputation; an honest Man and a professed Censor speak boldly: But it is only a general Likeness, and that Conformity is attended with many Differences.

GENERAL Terms are also one of the Causes of the Misunderstanding, that prevails in most Disputes and Conversations. The Language of Men has sew other Words; for how can they speak more exactly than they think? One Man therefore applies a Word to a Subject, and another applies it to another Subject. One of them considers the same Subject in a certain Sense, and the other in an opposite Sense: When therefore one of them condemns what the other approves, if they could see their Thoughts mutually, they would frequently perceive that they are different, without being contrary. Their Discourse does not run upon the same Attributes and the same Circumstances; nay, sometimes it does not run even upon the same Objects.

EVERY thing has more than one Side, and there are frequently quite opposite Sides in one and the same Thing. Men make their Fortune, and ruin themselves in the War; they languish and prosper in Time of Peace; one Man improves his Mind, and another grows mad by Study. Every Peace is not equally just and happy; all Wars are not alike; there are many Kinds of Study; and various Circumstances in each Kind: Wherefore the State of a Question should be determined, before it be the Sub-

ject of a Dispute.

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GENERAL Terms afford Cavils and Subterfuges to those, who will not yield to a Truth expressed in those Terms. The Schools encourage that Abuse, to which Men are already but too much inclined: They put young People upon making contrary Speeches about one and the same Subject; which is an easy Task, when they run into general Ideas; and whatever they say, is no less false in one Sense, than true in another.

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When we ought to be contented with general Ideas.

VIII. THERE are some Subjects about which we must be contented with general Ideas, because our Way of Thinking cannot go fo far as to make them determinate. Such are the inward Operations of Grace,

the fecret Direction of Providence, the Perfections of God. If it be lawful to endeavour to increase our Knowledge about those Subjects, it must be done with Humility, and a great Diffruit of our Capacity. Besides, we ought to propose our Thoughts with a Modesty and Gentleness answerable to that Distrust.

Tis certain we cannot speak of God with too great a Moderation. It is better to rest satisfied with an imperfect Knowledge of Him, by being contented with general Ideas, than to run the Hazard of thinking unworthily of that GREAT BEING, by our Rashness in proceeding to de-

terminate Ideas.

When we ought to proceed to determinate I-

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IX. Bur, on the other Side, there are fome Subjects, about which it is highly neceffary to have an exact Knowledge and determinate Notions. Such are the Rules of Morality; for each of our Actions being

fingular and determinate, we are continually perplexed, when we have no other Rules but general Ideas. It is for want of more determinate and more distinct Notions that every body fancies he does well, even when he does ill, and condemnsothers, even when they do well. The fame Conduct, which is called Precaution, when we use it, goes by the Name of Revenge, when we observe it in others. What is the Reason of such a Contradiction? Men have only general Ideas of Precaution and Revenge: A general Idea is equally applied to opposite Subjects, provided they have something common; and in that Equality of Application, not only Passion turns the Scale, but also determines the Name: What is agreeable to Passion is looked upon as just.

MAHOMET knew how to fet up for, and be esteemed a Minister of GoD; he raised himself above CHRIST; and a great Part of the World was feduced by his Do-Arine. Numa made the Romans believe, that the Laws he gave them had been dictated to him by a Goddess. The Peruvians derive the Origin of their Religion and Policy from the Son of the Sun. The History of Livy is full of fabulous Prodigies, which were accounted true a-

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mong the Romans; otherwise he would not have inserted them in his History. We see every Day Fanatics, who pretend to be inspired. Was it not the same with Moses, the Prophets and Apostles? There are but too many People, who, confining themselves to those general Notions, remain in doubt, and even go farther. But if they will come to Particulars, and proceed to determinate Ideas of the Do-Etrine of CHRIST, and of the Circumstances of his Life, and of the Lives of his Apostles, their Doubts will vanish away. They will fee what Difference there is between a Report confusedly spread, and grounded upon Interest and Prejudices, and a very particular Narration, which, in order to be believed, wanted no other Help but its own Truth. The Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel are agreeable to good Sense; they are a reasonable Worship; whereas Fanatics continually vent mere Extravagancies; and if there is any Order in their Ideas, 'tis a Remainder of what Reason and Scripture have taught them, before they were Visionaries.

GENERAL Maxims of Politics are abstracted Maxims, the Application whereof does continually lead into Error, if all the Circumstances are not minded, and if those Maxims are tollowed upon Occasions, that will not bear it.

IX. WHEN a general Term is applied Division of to many Subjects in the fame Sense, it is general Words. called Univocal: Thus the Word Figure is applied to the Triangle and Circle. When its different Significations have only some Affinity, it is called Analogous. In that Sense we say, that a Food is wholsome; that a Way of Living is wholfome: But when one and the fame Word is the Name of more than one Thing, and those

Things have no Affinity, it is called Equivocal.

VOL. II.

X. WHEN we know those Subjects, which, though different, yet have the same Division of Name, the Equivocation is not dangerous; Equivocations: but it easily leads into Error, when Men through a Mistake have given the same Name to different Things, for Want of knowing them. Thus the Acts of the Mind and of the Body are confounded together, because they are denoted by the same Terms. The Sight is ascribed to the Eyes, Hearing to the Ear, and several Inclinations are ascribed to the Body. All metaphorical Terms are dangerous upon that Account. THERE

THERE is also another Sort of Equivocation, which imposes upon us insensibly, and is little mistrusted. 'Tis when one and the fame Term, denoting one and the fame Thing, is sometimes used in a larger and sometimes in a narrower Sense. All comparative Terms are thus liable to Ampliation and Restriction; and the Language of Men is full of Words, which feem to be absolute, and are really fo with respect to Grammar; but yet they ought to be understood in a comparative Sense. Such are those Terms, which express our Sentiments, agreeable, painful, intolerable, difficult : Such are the Words Authority, King, Mafter, &5c. and lastly, fuch are the Names of Virtues, fince in this World the most virtuous Men are those, who are the least faulty, and the freest from Vice. Which shews that the Language is not much to be relied upon; and that we must not be fond of Words, but study Things

themselves with all possible Application.

Nor only in difficult Matters, but even in the most eafy, Men perplex themselves with Equivocations, when their Fondness for a Conclusion prepossesses them in favour of its Proofs, and does not allow them to unfold their Obscurity. When Cicero, for instance, says that Men contradict themselves, when they complain of old Age, fince young People defire to attain to it; he falls into a Subtilty unworthy of his great Genius, and relies too much upon the Easiness of his Readers, if he hopes to ease their Grief for the Misery of old Age by a Quibble. In one Sense, young People would be willing never to grow old; that is, they would fain preserve the Vigour of Youth, and be always at a great Distance from the last Term; and to defire to attain to old Age is, according to their Notion, to defire not to die young. "Tis the Fear of Death, which makes them wish for a long Life; and they express that Defire by an equivocal Phrase, which Cicero takes in a contrary Sense: For, what makes young People wish to grow old, is the Fear of Death, the very Thing which renders old Age unpleafant.

THAT a Discourse may be accounted perfectly clear, it is not enough that the whole Sense may easily be difcovered; that Sense must also be obvious, and so plain, that the Reader cannot mistake it. But the Language of Men is too imperfect to speak always with such a Clearness: It is full of general Expressions, and metaphorical Terms, the Application whereof is often very equivocal. It is lometimes highly necessary to know the true Sense of an

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with Words.

Expression, a Theorem, or a Maxim, which seems to be susceptible of more than one Sense. Upon those Occasions we consult Use, and consider what Strength Words derive from it; we observe what goes before and what follows; we clear an Author by himself, and inquire whether he expresses himself more accurately in some other Place; we restect upon the Nature of the Subject treated of by him, that we may not ascribe to him any thing, which contains some Absurdity (y).

EQUIVOCATIONS have been in fashion for a long Time; but fince the middle of the last Century they lost their Credit by Degrees; and in our Days they are very much despised: 'Tis certain that Men are more nice and judicious than formerly: they are not so easily satisfied

EQUIVOCATIONS are a Sign of a vain Man, who endeavours to make himself admired, but as shallow as he is vain, since he is not qualified for his Aim, and knows not how to attain to it.

ALL Metaphors are a kind of Equivocations, fince we take the Name of a Thing to afcribe it to another, by reason of some Resemblance. That Application is frequently wrong, and yet it pleases us; and because it Vol. II.

Deinde erit demonstrandum, si quid ex ipsa re dabitur facultatis, id quod adversarius intelligat, multò minùs commodè sieri posse, quàm id, quod nos accipimus, quod illius rei neque administratio, neque exitus ullus exstet: nos quod dicamus, sacilè & commodè transigi posse.

Ac diligenter illud quoque attendere oportebit, num illo probato, quod adversarius intelligat, utilior res, aut honestior, aut magis necessaria, à Scriptore neglecta videatur. Id siet, si id, quod ab adversariis dicetur, minimè ejusmodi dicemus esse. Cic. de Invent. Lib. II.

⁽y) Primum, si sieri poterit, demonstrandum est, non esse ambigue scriptum, propterea quod omnes in consuetudine sermonis sic uti solent eo verbo uno, pluribusve in ea sententia, in qua is, qui dicet, accipiendum esse demonstrabit: deinde ex superiore, & ex interiore scriptura docendum, id quod quaratur, sieri perspicuum. Quare, si ipsa separatim ex se verba considerentur, omnia, aut pleraque ambigua visum iri: qua autem ex omni considerata scriptura perspicua siant, hac ambigua non oportere existimari. Deinde qua in sententia scriptor suerit, ex cateris ejus scriptis, ex sactis, ex dictis, animo, atque vita ejus sumi oportebit.

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pleases, we are imposed upon by it. When a Thing, from which we borrow an Idea to clear another Thing, offers to the Mind an Image upon which it dwells with Pleasure; when the Mind is affected with a pompous Narration, or an ingenious Description; it does not consider whether that Image agrees to the Subject it is applied to: the Mind loves it for its Sake, as Men love the Tales of Fairies, the Fables of Ovid and Homer, and Fictions in general. The Expression is then bright, but the Thought proves salse; and to avoid being deceived by it, the Discourse must be stript of its Ornaments, and reduced to plain Expressions; and one must see whether in that Simplicity it pleases still by its fine Sense.

QUIBBLES are also a kind of Equivocations, and may be allowed in a merry Subject; but to amuse the Readers or the Hearers with Trisles in a grave Subject, is to suppose in them a very great Lightness and a very wrong Desire of Diversion. Quibbles are especially agreeable and rightly placed in satyrical Strokes, because Men love to see the Ridicule of others, and to laugh at it. But the Phrase, which contains those Quibbles, being translated into another Language, or only changed into other Words, must always preserve a reasonable Sense; for, if the Sense does not support the Expression, it is a filly Jest, despised by all those who have a Taste for Things,

and are not fatisfied with mere Words (2).

It is not merely about Quibbles that a Translation discovers there is no Sense in an Expression, which was supposed to contain an ingenious one. It may be said in general, that the Translation of a Book from a dead Language into a living one, would frequently be sufficient to make one despise all the poor Things contained in it. What should we think of most Schools, did we read in French the Systems, but especially the Compendiums of Philosophy, so much admired by their Authors? It were in vain for them to say, that those Books are the true Key of the Sciences. If it were granted, it would be only

⁽z) Ex ambiguo dicta, vel argutissima putantur, sed non semper in joco, sæpè etiam in gravitate versantur. Africano illi majori coronam sibi in convivio ad caput accommodanti, cum ea sæpius rumperetur, P. Licinius Varus, noli mirari, inquit, si non convenit, caput enim magnum est. Cic. de Orat, Lib. II.

ly by looking upon them as a Key, which shuts the Door

of Learning.

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Some Quibbles give fome Strength, as well as some Gracefulness to a Thought. We are pleased to perceive in the very Sound of the Words, as it were, an Image of the Connexion to be found between the Ideas expressed by them. If good Advices are the most useful Services, those who have Courage enough to give them, ought to be looked upon as the most zealous and valuable Servants (a).

MEN have found out witty Sayings and Quibbles to raife the Attention; but when a Man of a found Wit perceives that his Attention is defired only to make him hear poor Things, he will not be attentive. Quibbles, though judicious, do not produce the intended Effect, if they are too frequent; for, Men being used to them, will not mind them, unless they appear at a distance one from another.

WHEN a very common Thought is contained under a feeming ingenious Turn, but fomewhat obscure and hard to be unfolded, we are angry with ourselves for having taken some Pains about a very small Matter: We despise the Author; and he appears to us mean and affected.

I F the Misanthrope was not grown a very scarce Book, I would only quote Numb. 31. of the Year 1711; but the Reader will not be displeased, if I take some Maxims out of it, to insert them in a Chapter of Logic, proper for

them.

Mos r witty Sayings consist in the Turn of the Expression, which without any Constraint offers to the Mind two Senses equally true. The first, which is obvious, has nothing in it but what is innocent; whereas the other, which is the most concealed, does frequently contain an ingenicus Malice.

THAT double Sense, in a Man of no Genius, is nothing else but a Want of Exactness. He knows not how to express his Thoughts with Words, that will only admit of

one Signification.

In a Man of Parts, that double Sense is an Art, whereby he knows how to raise two different Ideas, whereof the most concealed unfolds to those, who can dive into it, a nice Satyr, not discoverable by those who have not such a lively Penetration.

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SOME-

⁽a) Si Consul est qui consulir patriz, quid aliud fecit Opi-

SOMETIMES what makes a witty Saying, is nothing else but the happy Boldness of a single Expression applied to an uncommon Use. It frequently happens, that the Strength of a witty Saying does not confift in what we fay, but in what we do not say, and which is understood as a

natural Consequence of our Words.

A WITTY Saying is rather imagined than thought; it prevents Meditation and Reasoning; which is one of the Reasons why all witty Sayings cannot bear Printing. Most of them lose their Gracefulness when they are mentioned without the Circumstances, which occasioned them, and of which it is no easy Thing to make those sensible, who have not been Witnesses of them.

Bur tho' a witty Saying be not an Effect of Medita. tion, yet 'tis certain that the Flights of those, who are used to an exact Method of Reasoning, discover the Just-

ness of their Mind.

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THOSE Men have taught their Imagination, the never so lively, to yield to the Severity of their Reasonings; and their Vivacity, even when their Reason does not preside over it, being used to be confined within due Bounds. keeps there by a kind of Habit.

Tis, perhaps, for Want of that Accuracy in Reasoning, that the Ancients were so much mistaken about the Nature of witty Sayings and nice Raillery.

THOSE, whose lively Imagination is proper for Flights and witty Sayings, must take Care to get a Justness of Thought, that may appear even in their greatest Vivacity. It is also necessary they should have a great deal of Virtue, that they may not drop any thing contrary to Decency, and the Regard they ought to have for those, who are concerned in their witty Sayings.

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CHAP. V.

Of the five Universalia of the Schools.

HEN a general Idea is indifferently applied to others, cies.
which are also general, it
is called Genus; and those to which it is
applied, are called Species of that Genus.
The Idea of Figure is the Genus: the I-

deas of Triangle and Circle are the Species.

THE same Idea, which is Species, as being contained under a more general Idea, becomes Genus, when it is applied to other Ideas somewhat less general. Tree is Species with respect to Plant, and Genus with respect to the Cherry-tree, Apple-tree, &c. Those Nouns Genus and Species are relative.

The Idea of Being, the most general of all, is the supreme Genus. A general Idea, immediately applied to Subjects altogether determinate, such as the Idea of Man applied to Peter, and John, is called the Species of the lowest Rank: The other Ideas are subalternate Genus's

and Species.

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II. WHATEVER is contained in the Idea of Genus, is also to be found in the Idea of Species; but each Species has some Attributes more than the Idea of Genus; and among those Attributes which the Species has above the Genus, that which is the first, the Chief and the Ground of the others, is called Difference. Thus the Difference of the Triangle is being exactly bounded with three Lines. The Difference is also called Form and Essence; so that I have already shewed by what means it may Sect. II. be discovered.

III. THERE are fome Things, to the Knowledge of which our Ideas are fufficient to lead us; and therefore we need only be attentive, and we shall know them.

Such are Numbers, Figures, Proportions, and their Proporties.

perties. But there are also a great many Things, of which our Ideas would give us but a very small Knowledge, if we did not take Care to improve them by Experience. It must be frequently consulted, to know, for instance, the Nature of Savours, Sounds, Colours, &c. The first Principles are grounded upon our first Ideas. Natural Philosophers would be in the wrong, did they neglect them to mind only Experiments; for, a Science is imperfect, when it does not reach the first Causes. But the antient Schools did a much greater Prejudice to Natural Philosophy, when in order to unfold all the Effects of Nature, they confined themselves to general Ideas, too imperfect to be true Representations of external Objects, the exact Knowledge whereof is the Design of Natural Philosophy, and ought

to make its Perfection.

WHEN we proceed from the Genus to the feveral Species, with the Help of the Differences observed in those Subjects, for the Knowledge of which we need only confult our Ideas, we are obliged to a great Exactness, and cannot be dispensed with it. But when, for the help of Memory, we divide external Objects into Genus's, and fubdivide them into Species; we are more excusable, if it happens that we are not altogether fo exact. They are not fufficiently known to us, never to place in the same Class those between which it would be proper to make a greater Difference, and never to diffinguish into different Species those, which are like enough to make but one Species. It is highly necessary to remember, on the one Side, that the Diversity of Names is not always a folid Proof of Difference; and on the other, that many Subjects may have a common Name, without having the same Relations between them. Because each Science has its own Name, and our Knowledge is thus divided into feveral Classes, some People fancy sometimes that they have nothing common. They look, for instance, upon the Help which Mathematicks afford to Natural Philosophy, as foreign to it. And in Theological Matters, they undervalue whatever is dictated by the Light of Reason and common Sense. The groffest Fault in the humane Sciences is to fall into Contradiction; but, one would think, it is a Privilege of the divine Sciences, of the Science of Salvation. Some People believe, that 'tis the Character of a good hearty Man, and a found Orthodox, not to be moved with a Contradiction. Thus, one may find a thousand Instances,

Stances, wherein Men strain the Difference of the Species,

and suppose it to be greater than it is.

But Men do also frequently suppose an Equality of Relations between the several Species of one and the same Genus, and fancy that the same Conformity observed between two or three Species of one and the same Genus, is also to be found between all the others. This is one of those Principles upon which the Hope of the Transmuta-

tion of Metals is grounded.

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THERE is also another Precaution to be used, when we are to divide external Objects into Genus's, and subdivide them into Species. Because they are very impersectly known to us, instead of taking for Difference what is really so, and what deferves the Name of Form and Effence, we are often obliged to be contented with some appearance of Form, with some Attribute, which is at most but a Consequence of the Essence, and even sometimes a remote one. Whereby it may eafily happen that upon occasion of a common Accident, we shall place sometimes under one and the same Species Things belonging even to different Genus's, and fometimes under different Classes one and the same Species, by reason of some Accidents by which it is diversified. For Instance, if I should divide those Bodies that are taken out of the Earth, into transparent and opaque, and if upon each of those Gemus's I should find as many Species as different Colours, I should place some Metals and Minerals under the same Species of the White; and because there is white, yellow, and even transparent Sulphur, the same Species would be found under three Classes. These are unavoidable Inconveniences, at least sometimes, in such obscure Matters; but it is also very easy to prevent them, by not being obstinately resolved to follow the Way we are got into. A wife Man will never scruple, nor be ashamed to alter his former Method, when he perceives that it perplexes the Subject he defigns to clear. It is a piece of Prudence to reap some Benefit from the Faults of other Men; but it is a more uncommon Skill to know how to mend one's own Faults, and to avoid them for the Time to come (b).

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⁽b) When we are only to establish an arbitrary Order, which may facilitate the Knowledge of Plants; the Proof of the Goodness of a Method does not so much depend upon Reasoning, as upon

Ir is highly necessary for the help of Memory, and to avoid Confusion and the Trouble of Repetitions, to proceed orderly from the Genus's to their Species. We must avoid, as much as possible, to say upon the particular Subject of a Species, what is no less true of the others, and agrees to

the whole Genus,

When we have a general Principle, we must not make different Species of all the different Cases to which it may be applied, when it is applied to all as easily and with the same Method. Thus we shall not make as many Species of Impulsions of Bodies, as there are different Degrees in the Bulk and Velocity of Bodies that meet. We shall be contented to divide the Triangle with respect to its Sides into Equilateral, Isosceles, and Scalenum, without distributing the latter into as many Species as there may be Differences between its three Sides, because they are always calculated according to the same Principles, and by the same Rules.

IV. Those Attributes which are neProperties and cessarily annexed to the Difference, are called Accidents. Thus it is a Property of an odd
Number to compose an even one, if it be added to another odd Number. But the Attributes of a thing, which may be separated from it, without destroying its Nature and its Name, and changing its Species, are called Accidents. A Man is learned, ignorant, honest, envious, &c. and in all those different States, he is equally a Man. Some Attributes are Accidents of the Genus, but Properties of the

upon Conveniency and Clearness, and perhaps also upon a certain Agreeableness. Hist. of the Academy of Sciences, 1700.

The Distribution of Plants under their Genus's, makes it very

easy to name them, p. 95.

But because the Memory would be extremely clogged with 673 Genus's; if we take only the Flower of Plants, we reduce the Genus's to 14 Classes; and that Number being encreased by Plants, that have no Flower, and by the Distinction of Herbs, or Under-Shrubs, from Shrubs or Trees, amounts only to 22 Classes, from whence we descend to 673 Genus's, and from thence to 8846 Species, p. 96.

There was a Necessity to add 25 new Genus's, in order to range new Species of Plants discovered in the East, and which amounted to 1356. Hist. of the Academy, 1702, p. 65.

Species. A Body does not cease to be a Body, when it loses its Motion; but Fire ceases to be Fire, as soon as it is

no longer agitated.

V. THIS is what the Schoolmen offered as the Key of the Sciences: it was the magnificent Introduction into the great Art of ments of the Reasoning. One can hardly conceive, at least one must see it to believe it, how fond

Vain Amuse-Schools.

they were of those Fooleries. They asked in the first place, Whether there were only five Universalia, and whether Order, for Instance, could not make a fixth. They made it a Question, Whether those Universalia did exist somewhere, or were only Names of Ideas; and to dress up that impertinent Question in a Style becoming it and themselves. they asked, Whether the Universalia did exist à parte rei, or, à parte conceptus. They writ many Volumes about it, which were Heaps of Distinctions and barbarous Terms. What is most deplorable is, that Men who have been bred up in that Jargon, and have learned to substitute barbarous Words in the room of the Language of the Holy Spirit, have got a Habit of speaking above an Hour to darken a Text, or to fay many infignificant things upon it. Those who have filled their Memory with some Greek Words, which they apply to Diseases, the Nature and Remedies whereof are unknown to them, and laftly, those who have filled it with fome antient Laws, and are used to the Quirks of Law-Suits, pretend to have a Right to regulate Learning and Religion, and make bold to use those ill, who endeavour to have better Notions.

I SHALL fay fomething more about the fine things which the Schoolmen vented upon the fourth Universale. One would think they had bound themselves by an Oath never to fpeak clearly and accurately. They made four forts of Proprium's. There is a Proprium which belongs to the whole Species, but not to the fole Species, as fleeping belongs to Man. It is not therefore a Property, and a Consequence of its Difference. There is a Proprium which belongs to the fole Species, but not to the whole Species, as to be a Magistrate. There is a Proprium which belongs to the whole Species and to the fole Species, but not always, as laughing; and there is a Proprium which always belongs to it, as to be rifible, that is, to have the Faculty of laughing. Can one forbear laughing, when he represents to himself those poor things, uttered with a Mouth made

venerable by a long Beard, or repeated by a trembling and

respectful Disciple?

Bur with what Defign were those specious Trifles fet forth? The antient Sophists made the Parents of their Scholars hope to enable them, in a short time, to speak largely and readily upon all Subjects. To that End, they ranged under feveral Classes every thing of which the Universe consists: They gave a mysterious Name to each Class, and called those Classes the Scales of Things. When therefore a Question was proposed to them, they brought each of its Terms to its proper Class, and recalling into their Memory the odd Names with which it was filled, they gave for an Answer the Question itself transformed into a more obscure Language. What is the Load-stone? 'Tis a Fossil sympathetic with the North and the Metal of Iron. What is Man? 'Tis a rational Animal. In order to amplify those Distinctions, they forged long Digressions about the Words Fossil and Animal, and faid what they were, giving always Names instead of Things. I defire no other Instance of it but the famous Definition of Man by a rational Animal, which was the Master-piece of their Art, and does certainly prove they were not very rational.

ANY Man who goes to a Philosopher, in order to learn how to know himself, and asks him what Man is, has already the Idea of a Being who eats, sleeps, walks, and thinks, and speaks with some Coherence. So that when he is told that a Man is a rational Animal, he is told obscurely what he knew already. What is Animal? 'Tis a living and loco-motive Substance. What is living? "Tis what is nourished, and has in itself a Principle of Activity. What is loco-motive? 'Tis the Faculty of what moves and goes of itself from one Place to another. Those great Words, you see, come to nothing, or to a small matter; but those general Terms were proper to keep up a Dispute; for how many Distinctions, only to remove the Ambiguity of the Word rational, and to shew that the most stupid Men

partake of that Quality.

I SHALL fay nothing of their hafty di-Arbitrary Di- stributing into several Classes, things that Stinctions. were not known to them, being directed in that Distribution rather by the Senses and Fancy than by a true Knowledge. Is there, for Instance, more Difference between Water and Ice, than between melted and folid Lead? And yet Water and Ice are two

different Species, whilst the State of Fusion and Liquidity is only looked upon as accidental to Lead. And why? Because we see the same Ice many days, and look upon mek-

ed Lead only one Moment.

MEN frequentry make arbitrary Divisions; they distribute things into several Classes, by considering them in their Relations to us. Afterwards they forget by what Principles, with what Intent, and how hastily they have distinguished and divided a Genus into its Species. From an arbitrary and relative Division they draw the same Consequences, as they might do, if it was grounded upon Knowledge, and perfectly agreeable to Things. Gold is a perfect Metal: Other Metals are imperfect. Therefore they all tend to become Gold, and 'tis but helping them to become more perfect. Insects are imperfect Animals; therefore they arise from Putresaction.

I HAVE only touched upon those Matters, which formerly filled up whole Volumes. It seems to me needless to say any thing more of them: nay, perhaps I should have quite omitted them, had I not designed to create a Contempt for them, by making them known to my Readers. A Man who never heard of them, might fancy there are great Mysteries concealed under those great Words: Hec a limine salutanda, in boc unum, ne nobis verba dentur, & aliquid in his esse magni ac secreti boni judicemus.

SEN. Ep. XLIX.

VII. GENERAL Words are of Use to The Use and express general Ideas, those of Number, Abuse of general Instance, Figure, and Triangle; but ral Words. when we are to discover Objects, that really

exist out of our Minds, and are consequently determinate, to use general Words in order to explain them, is to delude others. Those Words confine our Knowledge, when we dwell upon them; and besides, if we pretend that they give a sufficient Light, we are grossly mistaken. In order to know a compounded Subject, one must have an Idea of all its Parts, and of the Constitution and Disposition of each of them: One must therefore proceed to determinate Notions, and not dwell upon general ones. I see, for Instance, upon a Case a Hand, which shews the Hours regularly: I admire it, and ask what it is. If I am answered, that it is a Machine sympathetic with the Sun, 'tis a Jest upon me. In order to satisfy my Curiosity, the Case must be opened before me, and the Parts contained in it must be sepa-

feparated; and when I have been informed of the Force and Figure of each of them, and of the Consequences of that Force and of that Figure, they must be put together again one after another in my Presence. When I have been taught what each of them can do by itself, I must be told what they can do by their Conjunction.



CHAP. VI.

Of Total, Partial, Full, Exact, Imperfect, Complete, and Incomplete Ideas.

The Word Object being cleared, gives a Light to the Distinction of Ideas into total and partial.



Sometimes we call Object of an Idea precisely what it contains; and in that Sense, an Idea does always represent its Object, fince it does certainly

represent whatever it represents. In that

Sense, every Idea is total. But we call also Object a whole Thing, which exists out of our Minds separately from others, and contains many Attributes, some of which are only known to us. Thus a Tree is an Object of my Thought, tho' when I think of that Tree, I only form an Idea of some of its Properties. Those Ideas which discover to me only part of what is contained in a Subject, are called partial.

Whether total a Tree, tho' I know only fome Parts and fome Properties of it: For I know it is a Whole, which contains more Parts than are

known to me. But if I know it only in part, and yet have a total Idea of it, is it not an obscure Idea? If by the Word obscure you mean less clear, and less affecting, I grant it; but if that Word be taken in an absclute Sense, I deny it; for what is absolutely obscure, is not conceived

IV. A

ceived under any Idea whatsoever. Wherefore in such Cases a total Idea is general, and it is the general Idea of Being. Besides those Realities which I know determinately, I suppose others, of which I have only a general Idea. They are Realities; I know it. But how are they made? I don't know. The general Idea is clear in its Generality; for I know what Reality is; but I have no determinate Idea.

III. PARTIAL Ideas help us to come near the Total, because when we are atten- Warnings. tive to an Idea, there arise others, which have a relation with it, as the Attributes of a Thing have a relation one with another. From the Knowledge of a Part the Mind proceeds to the Knowledge of another. A partial Idea well fettled does also prevent our being miltaken by ascribing to a Subject such Attributes as are inconfiftent with those, which we have already discovered in it. But, on the other fide, partial Ideas do frequently occasion Mistakes, because Men being weary of their Inquiries, and apt to believe that they have exhausted a Subject, fancy they know it entirely, when they only know some Parts of it (c). From thence proceed Misunderstandings and Difputes. Every body has feen a Part; they have feen different Parts; and each of them fancying he has feen all, calls that Man a Visionary, who ascribes to a Subject what he himself does not perceive in it. I must observe, that it is a very dangerous thing to confine one's felf to partial Ideas in the Practice. By looking upon a Project only on its fair Side, and frequently with a Prospect of some small Advantages, we expose ourselves to great Inconveniences. Most Men grow vicious for no other reason, but because they examine their Conduct on its excufable Side. It is lawful for every body to live by his own Trade: Whereupon Men do not scruple to serve in the most unjust and barbarous Wars. It is lawful to labour for and enrich one's Family: Under that Pretence, Men will do the meanest and the most shameful things, flatter, supplant, and deprive of their Inheritances those for whom Nature and Justice defigned them.

⁽c) I don't see the whole of any thing, nor do those see it, who presend to shew it. Montagne, Book I. Chap. L.

IV. A TRULY total and determinate Another Di-Idea, which discovers to the Mind whatever finction. is contained in a Subject, is an exact Idea.

The Latins have a very just Expression for it: they call it adequata, to which they oppose the Idea inadequata; whereas when we oppose to an exact and entire Idea an unexact and imperfect one, those Words are ambiguous; for that Name may be and is usually given to those Ideas, the Truth whereof is not sufficiently free from Falshood, and which are not fufficiently clear, and likewife to those which want fomething to determine the Questions wherein they are concerned.

BECAUSE the Supreme Intelligent Being is Almighty, it may be that each of his Works contains much more than our narrow Minds can apprehend in it; fo that we cannot affirm without Rashness that we know any Object entirely and exactly. There is no need of going a great way to find Infinity every where. Let Space be a real thing or not, we must grant that it is unbounded. There is no end of the Division of Matter; and the Supposition of

Atoms is immediately attended with Contradictions.

V. PARTIAL Ideas are more or less Ideas more or full. As they come nearer a total Idea, they less full. grow more compounded and fuller, that is, they join to others, with which they make

a greater Collection, and compose an Idea containing a greater number of Ideas. I shall have hereafter a more particular occasion to shew how we can enlarge our Ideas, and make them fuller, by adding to them those which

ought to be annexed to them.

VI. WHEN an Idea is fufficiently full, that is, when it offers a fufficient number of Complete and Things, Attributes, and Realities, fo that incomplete Ideas. an Object which answers to that Idea, may be conceived existing out of our Minds, it is

called a complete Idea. Thus the Idea of a Body at rest, without Pores, cubic, and a Foot long, perfectly smooth in all the Lines, which terminate its Surfaces, and placed upon a Space, the Situation whereof is specified; I say, that Idea is a complete one. But the Idea of Number in general, the Idea of Figure, in a word, all our general Ideas are incomplete, fince every thing that exists, is determinate.

THAT Distinction, which is evident, and at the fame time too simple to be suspected of a false Subtilty, I fay, that Distinction is sufficient to overthrow the System of Spinosa. That famous Atheist, whose Reputation is only owing to his Impudence, or to the Folly and Immorality of his Followers, takes for granted that there is but one Substance. If you will call that only Substance GOD, he is not against it; for he plainly sees, that Word signifies nothing: But he pretends that ourselves, and every thing we perceive, in a word, whatever we call Creatures,

are Modifications of that only Substance.

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THIS is a very chimerical Supposition, Obscurity and Darkness itself. See how he pretends to demonstrate his Principle. There is, fays he, but one Definition of Substance: therefore there is but one Substance; otherwise the Thing defined would not answer its Definition. By this excellent way of arguing, I shall prove that there is but one Number; for there is but one Definition of Number in general: 'Tis a Collection of Units: 3, 7, 21, 105, are not different Numbers; they are Modifications of a fole Number. In like manner, you believe that you fee many Figures: you are mistaken; there is but one. Figure is a Space bounded with Lines. All the Triangles, all the Circles, all the Quadrilateral Figures, &c. which you have feen, are Modifications of one fole Figure. Again, there is but one Man; and Peter, James, and John, all those who are now alive, all those who are dead, all those who shall be born hereafter, are not as many Men; they are Modifications of one fole Man, who is neither born, nor dies, and is not to be feen. One must have a prodigious Repugnancy to be an honest Man, to tall into Irreligion by fuch an inconceivable Principle, and so plainly ridiculous.

WE have a fingle Idea of Substance applicable to an infinite number of Subjects; but that fingle Idea, which is always the same, is a general and incomplete Idea, to which no Object answers precisely. An Object, in order to exist, must contain something more than what that Idea offers. Wherefore as I have one and the fame Idea of Tree, which I apply to a great many Trees, all different, all determinate and real; in like manner, I have a general Idea of Substance applicable to an infinite number of Substances, all different, determinate, and H

VOL. II.

real Substances. I have a general Idea of Number, a general Idea of Figure, a general Idea of Man, a general Idea of Tree, a general Idea of Substance. Nothing answers precisely and separately those general and incomplete Ideas; but I have complete and different Ideas of many Trees, many Men, and a great many Substances. A different and determinate Object answers each of those complete Ideas and complete Definitions.

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PART II.

Of JUDGMENT, the Second Operation of the Mind.

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Of Clear and Obscure, Distinct and Confused IDEAS.



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OULD our Will a- The Origin lone produce in us and Definition those Ideas, which per- of the Act fectly represent all we called Judgdefire to know, then ling. fimple Perception a- and and gold

lone might be sufficient to give us the Knowledge of all Things: To judge, to reason, to discourse, would

be superfluous Acts. As foon as I should defire to know a Load-stone, immediately a Collection of Ideas, or, which is the fame thing, one compounded Idea would take me Vol. II. H 2 up,

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up, and employ me, and shew me what the Load-stone is, the Figure of its Parts, the Size of its Pores, the Motion of the Matter that passes thro' them; Perception alone, I say, would at once impart all this to me. It would be the same as to a Triangle; I should view its Parts, its Generation, the Proportion of its Sides to one another, and all its Relations to other Figures. And thus it is, that the Supreme and All-Perfect Intelligence knows all at one single View.

But we commonly begin with putting a Name on one entire Subject, of which notwithstanding we have only some partial, or loose Idea. This becomes after something more determinate; and new Ideas join that partial one we have already; by degrees it grows fuller, and represents a greater number of Attributes, or Properties. With this Idea, so increased and perfected, we compare the last that was added to it; that is, we compare a Part with its Whole; and finding that it agrees with it, and really unites itself to the other Parts we already know, we acquiesce in this Assemblage of Ideas; and this we call Judging.

In learning to number, I form the Idea of the Number 6, as exceeding 5 by one Unit, and as much exceeded by 7. Then I come to confider, that it divides itself into two equal Numbers, each of which contains three Units. By this, the Idea of the Number 6 becomes more compounded; the Idea of an even Number is one of its Parts. In comparing this new Idea with that of the Number 6, thus become fuller by this Addition, I see that it agrees with it, and the other Ideas which I already have of it; so that I affent to this Coherence of these Ideas; and to speak in common Language, I judge that 6 is an even

Number.

I HAVE the Idea of a Triangle, and that Idea is compounded of many others: among these partial Ideas, I chuse that of two Sides exceeding the third in Greatness; and this Idea, which I had drawn separately, I join with the others, from which I had separated it, and say, a Triangle always contains two Sides, which, being taken together, are greater than the third.

WHEN I say, Matter is divisible, among the Ideas which I unite together to form that of Matter, I attend particularly to that of Divisibility; I see that it agrees effectually with the others; I assent to it; and this is called

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judging that Matter is divisible.

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WHEN I say, that Modesty sits well on the greatest Men, that Politeness is the Ornament of a Magistrate, that Meekness and Humility are the Characters of a true Churchman, in that Composition of Virtues, Qualities, and Talents, which we admire, expect, and love in Great Men, a Magistrate, and a Churchman, I see Modesty, Politeness, Meekness and Humility, I find the Effect which these Qualities make among the others, to which they are joined; I am sensible of this, I own it, and when I am thus thinking, I judge.

WHETHER a Judgment arises from a single View, or is the Conclusion of Reasoning, it is plain it is an Act of the Mind, as different from Reasoning as the Effect from its Cause. Simply to perceive, and attend to one compound Idea, is one Way of Thinking. To separate an Idea from those it is, or may be joined to, and then to reunite it, thus going about from a Separation to a Conjunction, is another Way of Thinking. There is a Difference between perceiving simply, and reflecting that we perceive, and saying so to ourselves, or to others: these last Ways of Thinking have received the Name of Judgment.

A JUDGMENT does not lose this Name, tho' it may be the Effect of Reasoning; for a Conclusion is not itself a Reasoning, it is a Proposition we agree to, in virtue of the Principles that establish it. Thus, when we inquire whether this Expression, Americal Man ought not to keep up an immortal Hatred, be a Reasoning, or a simple Judgment, we may answer, that it is a Judgment, comprehending a sufficient number of Ideas, to form a Reasoning pro-

per to demonstrate the Truth of it.

THERE are People, who only think at random, and are fatisfied if two Things offer themselves to them at the same time, and their Ideas be all at once awakened, to confound and mix them in one and the same Proposition: But it would be ridiculous to define the Nature of Judgment by a Circumstance so accidental, and often so unreasonable. Is it that they who have imagined to themselves new Curves, and new Properties in Curves, pronounce nothing upon them, but in favour of some Ideas, that are raised in them at the same time?

II. THEREFORE, whenever we judge, we compare a total with a partial Idea, and we know that the fecond makes really a Part of the first: The first has taken the Name of Subject, the second that of Attribute, Property, or Accident.

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How we difeern the Attribute from the Subject.

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IN Discourse, these two Parts of one Proposition are not always found, each placed in his Rank, but to review and differn one from the other, we are only to ask ourselves, What is he upon? What does the Question turn upon? What does he speak of? What Thing is that, of which he affirms or denies another Thing? The Answer to these Questions will point out the Subject; and you will have the Attribute, if you inquire, What does he fay? What does he affirm? What does he deny of that Thing he speaks of? The Attention of the Mind is raised by these Questions; and if the Propositions, whose Subject and Attribute you look for, be not a mere Knot of Words, that fignifies nothing, or is not understood, as running upon Matters of which we have no Knowledge at all, there is only need of common Sense and Attention, and then the Answer will be just; and if any thing else be wanting, it is only Pra-Ctice.

THE Act I now explain, when confidered as within the Mind, is called a Judgment; but when expressed, it is a Proposition. Now a Proposition is often conceived in such a manner, that every Term in it may be looked upon as a Subject and an Attribute. For Instance, when I say, in the Words of S. Paul, that Death is the Wages of Sin, we may look upon Sin as a Subject to which Death is attributed as a Confequence; and Death also as a Subject to which we attribute an Original from Sin. Thus we must be determined by the Chain of the Discourse; for if Death and its Original be the Point it turns upon, that will be the Subject; if Sin, and the making it odious, this will be the Subject, and Death the Attribute. We shall find in what follows, that there are Cafes in which this Difcernment of the Subject from the Attribute is necessary.

The Subject and Attribute clear each other reciprocally. III. WHEN a Man aims at explaining a Proposition to others, and examining it himfelf, to assure himself of the Truth of it, he must begin with that Term of the two, which is the most easy, and the best known, that it may enlighten the other; for as these two Terms are connected, and their Meanings

are united in one and the same Idea, the understanding of the one ought necessarily to be subservient to that of the other.

Since the Language of Men is very imperfect, to unfold it justly, and enter into their Ideas, we must sometimes confine, and sometimes extend the Sense of the Terms they

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they use: thus the Subject confines or extends the Attribute; and on the contrary. For Instance, the Word Holy, has a quite different Extent, when applied to Jesus Christ, from that it has, applied to Men.

IV. SINCE the Attribute expresses a new Idea, freshly united to the Subject, it Of Identical should declare something which the single Propositions.

Name of the Subject does not at first make

known to all the World; for a Proposition that tells us no more than what one of its Terms has sufficiently expressed, is called *Identical*, or *Nugatory*: This is trifling, like the Answer of a Child; What is a Circle? A Circle. What is a Tree? A Tree.

EXPLICATIONS of a Metaphor by a long Train of Metaphors, are often no more than a heap of Identical Propositions.

YET all Propositions of this Form, are not Nugatory; but they only that pretend to clear a Thing, and yet indeed give no Light to it, whether it be by the Attribute's repeating the same Subject in the same, or different Terms. But these Identical Propositions are sometimes proper: As it I fay, Things must not be confounded; everything is what it is, and no other; an Unit is an Unit, a Tree is a Tree, a Stone is a Stone, &c. these Propositions are to many Instances of the Truth of my Opinion, and of any general Rule. Sometimes again, the fame Term, in the fecond Place, has not the fame Senfe as in the first; either it has a new Force, or includes some Allusion. Thus I fay, an honest Man is always an honest Man; to shew that fuch a Man ought to be fo in all Circumstances: Thus again I would fay of a Man of Courage, that is to give a Proof of it, and of a Cheat that would impose upon another, fuch an one is always fuch an one, calling each by his proper Name. The sandange diswined half to deed

M A N Y Propositions may seem to be Nugatory, that are not so: When I say, a Triangle is a Figure contained within three Sides; there is nothing new, or unknown before; but then it is not trisling; for I mean, that the first Word includes all the Sense of the sour following; and that my first Idea of a Triangle is of a Space comprehended in three Lines, and that from this first Idea others must be drawn, which, joined to it, will render the Knowledge of a Triangle more entire and perfect. Again, it is not Identical, or Nugatory, to say, that a Triangle is a Figure, that a Cherry-Tree is a Tree, when it is necessary to declare that

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they are of the number of those Things, to which we annex the general Idea of a Figure, and of a Tree. In short, when we define, not a Word only, but a Thing, tho' the Idea of the Definition ought to be the same with that of the Thing defined, (otherwise the Definition would not be good, and we might define one Thing for another) yet the Proposition expressing such a Definition ought not to be looked upon as Identical and Nugatory. For when I define a Circle, for Example, or Motion, it is as if I should fav, this Figure, whose Idea your Eyes have already afforded you, conceive to be a Space inclosed within a Curve Line, described by the Extremity of a Right Line moving round about its other Extremity. Thus, what you call Morion, some Apprehension of which you already have by the Effects of it, which you have feen, as a thing that displaces, that breaks, &c. you will better conceive by the Idea of a Body, that applies its Surface successively to the

Surface of those with which it is encompassed.

A G A I N, when we repeat these Definitions to those that have been informed of them before, and entirely have the Idea they express, or when we repeat them to ourselves, yet they are not to be looked upon as Identical, or fuperfluous. A Collection of Terms, that display an Idea, and present the Parts of it distinctly, one after another, puts us in a better Capacity than a fingle Word could do, to fee what follows from it, to draw Consequences, and to pass from the Ideas we already have to those we had not. This is a very great Help to the deciding of Questions, the refolving of Difficulties, and the advancing in Knowledge, to make ourselves attentive to Definitions, and compare the Things fo unfolded among themselves. Why are the Arcs of many concentrical Circles, contained within the fame Radii, proportional? If I repeat the Definition of a Circle, I shall forthwith apprehend, that the half, the third, the feventh Part of a small Circle, &c. is described exactly in the same Time as the half, the third, the seyenth Part of the great Circle; and that by Confequence, the two Radii, that inclose the fourth, or the ninth Part, 850. of the one, do also inclose the fourth, or the ninth of

SUPPOSING I would know, whether there are Atoms of Motion, or whether that be impossible: to clear this to myself, and get an Assurance upon it, I call in the Definition of Motion; I see in that distinctly, that it is a successive State; I find that an Atom cannot be passed by with

PARTII. the Art of THINKING.

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the least Succession; and from that I conclude, that while the moving Body is upon an Atom, it can have no Motion at all.

V. THEREFORE, when we judge, we have, 1. At least two Ideas. 2. We compare them. 3. We perceive, that the first contains the second, or excludes it; and lastly, we acquiesce in that Perception.



CHAP. II.

The Division of Propositions into Affirmative and Negative.

PROPOSITION is com-

monly expressed in three What it is to Terms; A Triangle is a affirm or deny. Figure; Six is an even

Number; Extension is a Substance; Matter is divisible. We give the first of these

Terms, a Triangle, Six, Extension, Matter, the Name of Subject, as we said above. Figure, Substance, even Number, Divisible, are Attributes. The Word is, which joins the Subject and Attribute, is called the Copula, or Conjunction of them.

THESE Names are plainly suited to Affirmative Propositions, of which we have given some Examples. But, in the Negative, as when I say, a Circle has no Angles, instead of attributing something to a Subject, I do, on the contrary, separate a Thing from this Subject: I say, and maintain, that the Thing denied does not make an Attribute of the Subject, of which I deny it. The Words, Copula, and Attribute, are applied (say some) to such Propositions in an improper Sense; and we retain them, because they have the same Place in Negative Propositions, as the true Copula, and Attribute, have in the Affirmative. But we may keep to these Names their proper Signification, provided that in Negative Propositions, we mean by the

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Attribute the Exclusion of the Thing, denoted by the fecond Term: thus a Circle, containing the Exclusion of Angles, this Exclusion is attributed to it in a very proper Sense: thus again, when I say, that Extension does not think, I attribute the Exclusion of Thought to Extention.

ed, that the Idea of the Attribute is comprehended in the Idea of the Subject; and when we deny, we take it for granted, on the contrary, that the Idea of the Subject contains the Exclusion of the Attribute. In this consists the nature of Assimption and Negation. I affirm, signifies, I understand, that my second Idea is contained in the first. The Notion of Divisibility is contained in that of Body; the Notion of Figure in that of a Triangle. And to deny, is to maintain, that the Exclusion of the second Idea is contained in the first: 5 and 2 do not make 8, signifies, I see the Exclusion of the Idea of 8, in the Idea of 5 and of 2.

THERE is a good deal of Difference between not feeing the fecond Idea in the first, and feeing the Exclusion
of it in the first Idea. The first of these Cases engages us
to suspend our Judgment, but the second determines us to
deny. A Man that is ignorant of Geometry, does not see
the Value or Quantity of two Right Angles included in
the Idea of the three that compose the Triangle; yet he
would do ill to deny this Equality of Value. For no Man
has a Right to deny that which he does not see, any more
than to affirm it. To have reason to deny, he must see
the Exclusion of a second Idea in a first: thus I deny,
that the Diameter divides the Circle into two unequal Parts,
because the Generation of a Circle, and the Idea of its Nature, makes me see the Exclusion of this Inequality.

A Proposition may be expressed in Negative Terms, and yet have all the Sense and Force of an Affirmative. To be affured of this, we need but ask, r. What is the Sub-

ject. 2. What Idea we unite to that Subject.

The Weight of Gold, compared with that of Glass, is neither more nor less, than as the Proportion is of 9 to 8. It is plain, that I speak of the Weight of Gold, and that I affirm it exceeds that of Glass, in the Ratio of 9 to 8. To the Idea of Gold, I join that of a Weightiness, which surpasses that of Glass in the Proportion of 9 to 8.

be contained in a first; that is, that my first The Propriety
Manner of Thinking may present to me all of Affirmathat the second offers to me, the

found to be contained in the first. So that the Subject of an Affirmative Proposition should take in all the Ideas that make up the Notion of the Attribute. If the Idea of Figure should contain the Notion of any Property, which is not in a Triangle; and if the Idea of a Tree should contain likewise any Notion, that is not in the Idea of a Cherry-Tree, the Triangle would not be a Figure, and the Cherry-Tree would not be a Tree, no more than Stone is Metal; for tho' many Ideas of Metal are in the Idea of Stone, as Hardness, Weight, &c. yet they are not all in it; Ductibility, for Example, is not proper to Stone; and after it is diffolved, it does not harden again into Stone, or return to its former State. Therefore I cannot fay, that Stone is of the Metallic kind, because it wants something that belongs to the nature of Metal. So that the whole Compais of the Attribute, that is, the Properties it includes, should be contained in the Subject, if the Proposition be affirout for sanklisianno mative.

But it is not at all necessary, that in these Propositions the Attribute should suit the Subject, in its whole Extent; that is, that each of the two Terms should have the same Extent of Signification, and that we may apply the one to all we apply the other to: It is not necessary, that the Idea of a Triangle must be applicable to all, which the Idea of a Figure is applicable to, in order to say rightly, that a Triangle is a Figure; nor that we may call all that is hard a Stone, in order to say, that a Stone is hard. Therefore, the Idea of the Attribute agrees with that of the Subject, only in a Part of its Extent; that is, it is also applicable to many other Things; for some Things, that are very different, have often a Resemblance in some of their Properties or Accidents.

THE Equality of Extent between the Subject and Attribute takes place, when the Attribute expresses the Essence of the Subject. We call these Propositions reciprocal; and such are all good Definitions, which express justly the Nature of a Thing: They characterise, and distinguish it from all others: for the Essence of a Thing belongs only to that Thing, and suits all that bears its

Name.

Name. Every Triangle is included in three Lines, and

every thing included in three Lines, is a Triangle.

In Propositions, where the Attribute is a Term of Comparison, the Compass of its Idea does not take in all the Parts that make up the Positive, taken in an absolute Sense: The Sense of these Comparative Terms must be regulated by Usage; and it is enough, if we find those Ideas in the Subject, which Custom has annexed to it. We fay of a Man, who has fometimes need of Allowance, that he is a perfectly honest Man; of an Orator, who has his Defects, that he is an an excellent Orator; and of a Divine, or Lawyer, &c. that he is able, and skilful, tho' he may be ignorant of many Things in his Profession. It is fufficient to merit these and the like Characters, in the Sense that Custom has put on these Terms. A Term or Expression may express a Merit above the Common, and not determine the Degree; but only give a very general Idea of this Superiority. Here we must stop, be content with this general Idea, and study ourselves the Subject we hear to be praifed, to know how far it deserves it. But we love to determine; we lessen or heighten a Thing, according to our Humour, Inclination for a Person commended, Complaifance for the Praiser, and Prepossession of their Understanding and Sincerity, are apt to mif-lead those, who cannot judge exactly of Things.

III. Bur the contrary must be said of The Property Negative Propositions. That the first Iof Negatives. dea may contain the Exclusion of the fe-

cond, it is not necessary that it should exclude all that is contained in a fecond. It is enough, if it cannot admit any one of its Parts or Attributes: That a Stone be not a Metal, it is not necessary that its Idea should exclude all those that make up the Notion of Metal; it is fufficient, if it does not admit some of them. That an Action be blameable, it is not necessary for it to have no Good in it, but any one Circumstance, incompatible with Duty. Thus one Idea is not denied of another in all its Comprehension; but it is denied in all its Extent. If one Thing, to which the Name of Metal agrees, may be affirmed of a Stone, it will not be true, that a Stone is any kind of Metal; and if a Plant or Mineral may cure one Distemper, tho' it may increase another, we cannot refuse it the Name of a Remedy. We cannot say, that a Man is not beloved, tho' he has but one Friend. Thus the

the Attribute of a Negative Proposition is expressed, and denied, in all its Extent. All it can be applied to, is re-

mote from the Subject.

W E fee by this, that to avoid a Mistake, we ought to have as complete Ideas of the two Terms we compare, to unite or separate them, as are needful to make good the Comparison. To know that a certain Diet is wholfome, and advise it without hazard, we must not only understand, that it is good to some, and a Remedy to some Diseases; but we must comprehend all the Properties of it, and their Relation to the State of him we advisc. To know a Right of doing this or that, we must not only confider it in some Respects, as we find convenient, but in all its Faces, and Relations, whether with ourselves or others. A small Conformity should not perfuade us that Things are entirely fuitable; so as one shall deserve the Name of the Attribute, and the other that of the Subject; and that the first is perfectly included in the fecond. But few oblige themselves to this Discussion. The meanest Interests often give Birth to fuch Passions, as determine their Judgments.



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CHAP. III.

Of the Division of Propositions into True and False, Certain, Uncertain, and Probable.

Definition of True and Falle.



I. PROPOSITION is true, when it affirms what it ought to affirm, and denies what it should deny: It is false, when it affirms what it should deny, or denies what it should affirm.

For our Thoughts and Judgments are then true, when Things are fuch as we fay; when we unite what we ought

to join, and oppose what we ought to separate.

THESE Definitions cannot be contested. They, who affect to doubt, whether Mankind has any Share of real Knowledge, or not, and are therefore afraid of ever judging positively of any thing, lest, as they pretend, they should be mistaken, do only fluctuate in such Uncertainties. because they know not how far the Things themselves are conform to our Ideas; or whether there may not be fome Marks wanting, which would be necessary to enable them certainly to diffinguish those Ideas, which represent Things, from those that do not.

II. To discover this Character, without What it is to which, we shall not find out the Truth, exbe affured. cept by Chance; but reject what is true, as falle, or embrace what is false, as true; or

be always doubtful and uncertain; to discover this, I say, I forthwith ask myself, What it is to be affured? It is not to be able to doubt, or to help believing: All these Terms are plainly fynonymous. A Man would contradict himfelf very grossly, if he said, he doubted of what he could not help believing; in this Case, or if he will be pleased to talk, without knowing what he fays, it is best to leave him to himself; and he cannot complain, that you refuse to reason with him, because he affects not to reason at all. We may always hinder ourselves from believing, by being careless, opinionative, or inattentive to our own Ideas when we think, or the Sense of Words when we speak, or hear others.

others. But when we apply our Attention, I affirm, there are many Cases, in which we cannot help believing, and so affenting to the Truth of our Thoughts, and their Confor-

mity with Things.

III. To prove this in a regular Way, I confider, that our Judgments and Proposi- Certainty in tions turn either upon our Ideas, or Things, our Ideas.

that exist without us: As to the Judgments we make on our own Ideas, in doubting, whether we fee the fecond, or the Exclusion of the fecond, in the first, when either are really fo; we perceive it, we are fenfible of it. For Perceptions are conicious Acts; and can a Man help believing, what he is indeed conscious that he perceives? He must carry the Point to an excessive Height of Impudence to affirm the contrary. But, fays one, I have been often deceived in meditating, and have thought I perceived fomething in my Ideas, which I have not perceived; for this Reason I doubt, and every Moment Iapprehend, that perhaps I may believe I shall see, what I do not fee. I answer, that a Man talks by himself, as well as in Company; and in Meditation, if he has not any Words in his Mouth, at least they are in his Head. It may then happen, that carried on by the Warmth of inward, as well as external Discourse, and worked up by the Fire of his Temper, he supposes beyond what he sees; but he is not allowed to conclude: Therefore now, when I go Step by Step, now, when I examine one Part after another, when I make myself attentive, and invincibly perceive that I fee; yet perhaps I do not fee: No Man can talk thus feriously, unless his Understanding be reversed; it would be as foolish to make use of this Language, as to imagine, in fpight of his Sense, that perhaps his Hand is not in cold Water, because at one Time he was scalded in hot Water.

To avoid Precipitation, and the Errors into which it casts us, to see effectually, and not barely suppose that we fee, we must (as we have already infinuated) go Step by Step; begin with fimple Ideas, always attend to the forming and rife of those that are compounded; in short, examine the Judgments we have made, and the Conclusions we have drawn, in collecting and disjoining the Ideas that compose them. I will give an easy Example of it: After I have faid, with too much Precipitancy, 7 and 8 are 16, I examine my Calculation, and own my Error, by faying, 16 is 10 and 6; therefore to make 7 and 8 equal to 16, it is necessary, that fince the first Sum on the one hand,

that

that is, 7 is less than 10, the first Sum on the other, by three Units; the second on this fide, that is 8, likewise should exceed the second on the other, which is 6, by three Units; but it is not fo, it wants one: therefore I begin again; and I fee that I should not be mistaken, if I said, I would put together 7 and 8; the first Number 7 is less than 10 by three Units; those I take from the second 8. and there remains 5; therefore 7 and 8 make 7, 3, and 5, or 10 and 5, or 15. But it requires a Length of Time, you will fay, and a Man will advance but little in the Sciences, if he goes only Step by Step in them, and proceeds by fuch repeated Examination, in passing with this Precaution from fimple, to compound Ideas. I cannot help that. Let any Man shew me another Road that is more concife, but equally fure; I will follow it with Zeal, and I will recommend it to others, to the utmost of my Power. But till this be discovered to me, I shall think that to make a Progress, is to collect some Truths, tho' small in Number; and not to amais the true and false at all hazards in the Memory; something certain, and much that is doubtful; for after that manner, the Lofs would swallow up the Gain. Befides, in the Method that appears to me necesfary, we may greatly advance, more than at first would be credible; 1. Because the Truth enlightens the Mind, and gives it a Fruitfulness quite differently from Error. 2. Tho' a Man cannot go a confiderable Length every Day in the happy Regions of Truth, yet when he goes with fo much Circumspection, he is not under so frequent a Necessity of Ropping short, and much more rarely of going back, as it happens every Moment to those who give a Loose to their Impatience in the Journey. After all, the Justness of Thought which a Man procures in conducting his Studies with this Caution, is infinitely more valuable, than a Memory, filled with a great Number of Propositions, amassed in a hurry; tho' by a lucky Hit of Chance all of them might prove to be true.

FARTHER, the Knowledge that is formed upon our Ideas does not lie in a narrow Compass, the Science of Quantity in general, that of Numbers, Geometry, the great Art of Reasoning justly, the Knowledge of ourselves, the Doctrine of Morals, all that is contained in the Sciences is founded upon Principles of Thinking, and turns only on the Comparison of the Ideas of True and False, of Equal and Unequal, of Proportion, Agreement, Equity, Decency; Ideas which are certainly in us, and to which

we may attend as often, and as long as we please. There

is enough in them to employ many Lives.

IV. I Now come to Propositions, that Certainty ahave for their Object Things existing without us: He that owns he believes, and believes, without having it in his Power to

hinder it; but adds at the fame time, that he doubts if what he believes thus, be true, he does not attend to what he fays, and speaks like a Man that makes no Scruple to contradict himself. Now it is impossible for us not to believe; by Consequence, it is impossible for us not to hold it for true, that if there be Circles and Triangles in the World, such as our Ideas represent them, they do certainly and really contain the Properties, the Ideas of which we find in the Notion of Circles and Triangles: So that the

System of the Universe which we build upon this Principle, is at least an uniform System.

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Bur when from the Ideas which I have of Steel, Brass, Motion, Wheels, Pinions, Teeth, which form the inner Part of them, and their Combinations, &c. I persuade myself that I can frame a Watch, and think the Success answers my Intention; when I make a fecond, a third, a hundredth, &c. and at once think on the Profit accruing from it; when I allot this Profit to certain Sums, whose Interest, or Ideas of it, take up my Thoughts to a certain Point, according to the Order of my Projects; I fay, when I am attentive to this Train of Sentiments, it is impossible for me to doubt that the Things which I believe are real; I cannot avoid being full of Certainty, not from a Principle of Impatience, that draws me in to believe, but because I find I am obliged to it, by the Evidence that enlightens me, and by the Repugnance I feel in maintaining the Contradiction to it.

BESIDES this, there are Propositions that may appear doubtful to me, when I only consider Things under general and abstracted Ideas; but which become unquestionable, when I attend to those Ideas that are concrete, and determinate. Thus, it is no Contradiction, that many thousand Beings may agree in telling me by Word of Mouth, and by Writing, that there is a Place in the World called Paris, tho' for all that, there may be no such Place at all. But that Men, formed as they are, should unanimously agree to put a Force upon themselves all their Lives, and frame a System of Lies, so well put together that one cannot discover the Illusion; and be always on their Guard,

to let nothing escape them that is contrary to their Fictions, tho' they can reap no Advantage from it, but the Pleasure of seeing me in a Mistake, this implies a Contradiction to their natural Biass, which it is impossible for me to believe. Our Knowledge of Men, and all Circumstances considered, is sufficient to give us a sure Persuafion of Facts, that, in metaphysical Abstraction, may be doubtful.

V. WHEN we are not determined by Uncertainty. any Light to agree to a Proposition; when the Relation of a Subject with the Attribute is altogether obscure; such a Proposition is called Uncertain.

VI. WHEN the Affirmative is supported by Reasons, and the Negative by others, that appear to be of equal Force, it is still uncertain (d). But if the Reasons are something stronger on one Side than on the other, and yet only a little stronger, it is less uncertain, and then it is called doubtful.

VII. In proportion as the Reafons grow fronger on one Side, and those on the other Side grow weaker, the Proposition becomes less doubtful, and by Consequence has degrees of Probabi-

lity and Likelihood.

VIII. Bur these are not Names that
The Relation belong to Propositions, considered absoof Propositions lutely, and in themselves; but relatively to
the present State of our Knowledge. For
the same may be uncertain to one, doubtful

to another, that fees it a little more clearly, and probable to a third, who on a longer or more attentive Examination has a better View of the Reafons that fustain, or oppose it. The same may be certain to a fourth, who carries the Proofs for or against it to an Evidence, that cannot be eluded without a Contradiction.

EVERY Man may inflance this to himself, if he reflects on his Advances in Knowledge; for some will not agree to all things, since what is doubtful to one, is probable to another, and demonstrative to a Man that is more knowing. Let me give one Example.

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⁽d) Quando in utramque partem contrariarum rationum sunt paria momenta, ne quidem quod probabilius occurrat cerni potest. Cic. Iusc. Quast.

IX. SUPPOSE a Man comprehends what is a Triangle, a Right Angle, the Example. Value of two Right ones, and knows no

If you aik him, whether a Triangle be equal to two Right ones, he will be uncertain, if two Mathematicians, equal in Reputation, and his Friends, affure him, one, that it is true, another, that it is falle. But if he hears this passes for a Demonstration, and a judicious Friend tells him he is deceived, this fingle Testimony will make him doubtful. If he bethinks himself of examining the three Angles of many Triangles with an exact Semi-circle, the more of them he measures, the more will the Proposition, that is confirmed by that repeated Menfuration, become probable to him. Yet from a hundred, or a thousand Experiments, he will not be able to conclude, without fome Diffidence, to all those that may be made in time to come: to bring him to a Certainty, he must have a Demonstration, drawn from the very Nature of a Triangle, which will prove to him, that the least Irregularity, whether beyond, or short of this Equality, implies a Contradiction to the Constitution of a Triangle.

WHEN a Man will not, or cannot examine the Proofs of a Proposition by his own Light and Judgment, he looks upon that as probable, which some knowing Men maintain; what more affirm, as more probable; what all agree in, as still the more probable; what is uncontested, as probable in the highest Degree. I still suppose that he has not

examined it in itself.

In necessary Matters, such as the Theorems of Geometry, we have necessary Proofs; in contingent Matters, where we have, tho' not so necessary, yet undoubted Proofs, these we call Moral, when they are sufficient to establish a perfect Certainty; for we also do sometimes give the Name of Moral Proofs to those that have no more than a bare

Probability.

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Ir does not imply a Contradiction, that ten false Witnesses, well instructed in the Truth, and well assured that they lie, would rather die by Torture, than get an Impunity by unsaying what they assured. This does not imply a Contradiction, as it does, that two Sides of a Triangle are lesser than the third; but it is not less indubitable. No Man, that makes use of his Reason, can persuade himself, that such a Madness can seize the Minds of Men, that are otherwise of good Understanding, peaceable, of good Manners; and who, by the Obscurity of their Birth, Vol. II.

and great Simplicity of Life, should be far removed from

fo foolish and very excessive a Vanity.

X. WHEN the Certainty of a Proposi-Certainty a. tion is proved in a Manner that obliges the gamst Obje- Mind to acquiesce in it, this Certainty ctions. cannot be overthrown by Objections, tho' we cannot answer them; if we find this

Inability comes, not from any Contradiction in the Propofition, but from this only, that the Subject is not well enough known, to clear all the Questions that may arise upon it. Will a reasonable Man doubt, that Heat softens Wax, and hardens Clay, and that Cold congeals Water, and breaks humid Stones, tho' a Metaphyfician displays his Subtilty in proving to him, that the same Cause cannot produce Effects so opposite. He is sensible that he is not practised in the Art of disentangling and explaining these abstract Ideas, and does not know the Nature of Heat and Cold, or the Subjects they act upon, so throughly, as to account for the total Operation of them, and all its Consequences; he keeps firmly to what he fees and knows, and lets alone what is unknown, and obscure. This Maxim is applicable to a Variety of Subjects; but chiefly to Religion.

WHEN we draw a furprifing Confequence from a Principle that appears certain, the first thing we ought to do is, to clear well the Sense of this Consequence: it may contain feveral Parts, fome of which, necessarily following from the true Principle (from which they are drawn) will present nothing but what is very credible; but the rest, which makes the Consequence appear to be false, will have no Connexion with the Principle, from which the true Parts

do arife.

Wisdom is a Good: A Good makes happy: Therefore the wife Man is happy in Torments. The wife Man is happy in not having deferved them; in supporting them patiently; in hoping for an End of them, and affuring himselt, that they will be followed by a fortunate Event. Thele are fome good things procured him by Wisdom. his Felicity diminished by his Pains? Yes certainly; for Wildom is not the only Good; nor does it fingly comprize all that is Good.

WHEN a Difficulty is not entirely removed by these kinds of Distinctions, we must examine afresh the Principles that are obscured by the Consequences we draw from them; look into the different Meanings of them, weigh well all their Proofs, and compare one after another, each Part of 11.

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the Consequence with each Part of the Principle. This Method will be often ierviceable to correct an Error, and entirely to separate the true from the false: It is chiefly of Use when a general Principle is opposed by some determinate Conclusion; for then the Error of the Confequence is manifest, and the Truth of the Principle is obscure. A vague or indefinite Proposition is, commonly at least, a little obscure; and we may take it in a Sense that is not true, to draw that Conclusion from it, which we find to be falte. I may in vain perplex myself with loose Reflections, on the Propenfity of Men to Error, on their continual Difputes, on the numerous Mistakes they fall into; but when I conclude from this, that I can be fure of nothing, I let this determinate Proposition against this wandering Conclusion: Am not I then certain that I think? Is it not certain, that Pain is more difagreeable than Pleafure? Is it uncertain, whether a Man be more amiable, when he only thinks of hurting others, and when he has their Interests at Heart? So again, it is in vain for me to say, that there is only one Substance; that to bring about the smallest Change, it must produce what was not before, and by Confequence must have an infinite Force; that the Infinite Being does all, and is necessarily what it is. When from this I conclude, that I have neither Liberty nor Power, my own Thought gives me a Distrust of these indefinite Ideas: I suspect a Sophistry, and equivocal Meaning in them, and when I come to examine them, I discover it.

Sometimes again, the Principles from whence we draw a Conclusion that surprizes, and seems to shake them, are so precise and clear, that the more nearly they are examined, the more we are convinced of the Truth of them; and those surprising Consequences follow so necessarily from them, that we cannot refuse to admit them, when we are convinced of the Principles from whence they spring. This

is the Maxim of Cicero (e).

THE Divisibility of Matter is a Proof of it. There can be no Part of a Body so small, as to be absolutely void of Extension; for unextended Parts cannot by being collected form any Bulk, or Extent at all. The one can add nothing at all to the other. But it follows from this, that

⁽e) Hæc mirabilia videri intelligo: sed cum certè superiora, firma ac vera sint, his autem ea consentanea, & consequentia; ne de corum quidem veritate est dubitandum. De Fin. Lib. III.

we may divide the Thickness of a Glove into so great a number of fmall Skins, that there will be enough to cover the Earth, and far more. These Films will be too little to deferve the Name of a Skin, but yet they for all that be some kind of Films. The Imagination may refift this Conclusion, and treat that as chimerical, which it cannot comprehend: The Understanding is convinced of the Truth of the Principles, and of the Necessity of the Confequence; besides, it apprehends whence it comes, that the Imagination is repugnant to it; but it despises the Murmurings of it, and is not at all disturbed about them.

THE Difficulties we oppose to a Truth that is well demonstrated, tend to prove, not that we deceive ourselves in what we evidently know, but that we know not the whole. For what is occasioned only by the Weakness of the Eyes, ought not in the least to hinder us from perceiving the Presence of what our Eyes see, and the Light that

fufficiently clears them, upon those Objects.

Whence it happens, that we have so little Certainty in the Sciences.

XI. I F, in order to arrive at Certainty, we must use the aforefaid Method, we need not be amazed at the Imperfection of humane Sciences. Most of our Writings are an irregular Mass of Light and Shade, of the Certain, and the Probable, and likely,

of True and False. Let a Man fairly reflect on the Order, or rather, the Diforder, in which he has performed his Studies. How few impose on themselves the Task of re-commencing them with all the Attention and Circumfrection we must necessarily use, to guard against a Mistake! After heaping up Materials from all Parts, with great Diforder, we fly to Occasions of putting them in Practice: then, with much Repetition of what we never knew well, because we never rightly examined it, we perfuade ourselves that we know it. A great number of Things present themselves every Moment, which we know Hill the less, because we have not Time to examine them; and yet, which we think ourselves obliged in Honour to fay fomething of; we therefore talk of them; and we talk of them agreeably to the Character with which we are cloathed, that is, decifively. TO THE SERVER.

CAN a Determination thus hastily made, and without Knowledge of the Cause, be supported by any Reasons, but what are at most but probable? By this we accustom ourselves to be satisfied with Probability, and infift, that others be satisfied with it. We lend the Weight 11.

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of our own Authority to several Reasons, that want it. Then when the Weight of Reason and Authority are once confounded, we cannot find a Flaw in them, without incurring a Disrespect to another, and committing a great Offence; so far, that to love the Truth, and dare to perceive that certain Persons are mistaken, is, in the Eyes of many, the same as trampling upon the most facred Duties, and insulting of Religion. The whole Lives of ignorant Men, by long Mistake, and making themselves feared, come at last, the gradually, to this Excess of Arrogance and Blindness.



CHAP. IV.

Of Pyrrhonism.

I. THAT we have faid in the Explication of foregoing Chapter will certainly be fufficient to esta-

blish an Acquiescence, and form a Taste of Certainty in every reasonable Mind: But there are some Persons, who affect to

remain in Uncertainty, and feem to be afraid of getting out of it. These are sometimes called Academics, because the Philosophers, who seemed to incline to this univerfal Doubting, taught in an House called the Academy, from Academus an Athenian Citizen, who left it a Legacy to the Public, for the Exercises of Youth. They are also called Sceptics, from a Greek Word that fignifies to confider; because, instead of judging rashly, they loved to examine a Thing on all Sides. At last, Pyrrhon, one of the most famous Advocates of this Sect, gave his Name to it. Till his Time, they doubted whether there was any thing certain in our Knowledge; but he, bolder than the rest, affirmed, that was not the only thing doubtful; and that no Proposition was certain, but this, that all was uncertain. The Sceptics, in looking for Certainty, fet a Value on Probability; but the Pyrrbonians would not own one Propofition to be more probable than another. Indeed how could they fay, that a Proposition is probable, and comes mear the Truth, when they maintained, that the Mind of Man has no Idea of Truth, and does not know the Character of it. But, on the other hand, how durst they say, that One and One make Two, is not more probable than the

most uncertain thing in the World?

Is HALL not amuse myself with shewing the Folly and Contradiction of these pretended Philosophers: For to what Purpose is it to dispute with those, who visibly, without Shame, and without Love of Truth, study only to give themselves Airs of Distinction? Montagne, whose Imagination was subject to a false Light, did well, and like himself, in thinking that there was more Shew in the Opinion of Pyrrhon, than in that of the common fort of Sceptics: He likewise embraced it, affirming, in his manner, without putting himself in Pain, whether he contradicted himself, or not, or whether his Words signified any thing, or were stat Nonsense; The Opinion of Pyrrho is more daring, and for that Reason, more probable.

II. THAT there are Persons, who entirely doubt of every thing, and durst not per-Two forts of Pyrrhonians. fuade themselves that they think and exist, is what one could not imagine, without Supposing their Brains to be out of Order. Most of the Pyrrhonians believe many things; for they cannot perfectly stifle Nature, or forget absolutely all that they really are themselves. Therefore they feel themselves, and are not only fenfible they are fomething, but believe they have a Commerce with others, and yield to a Variety of Truths. This happens daily to them, when unguarded. But when a Man asks them, or they reflect on the Law they have fet to themselves of Thinking quite differently from others, they will own nothing; they run to Evafions, and Perplexities, to embarrass others and themselves at the same time.

THERE are some Errors, that cannot entirely triumph over Nature: There are Prejudices, which we defend with Warmth, when any one contests them, but do not follow when we do not expressly attend to them. They will think, talk, act, as if they were of opposite Principles. This is, for Instance, the State of one that denies Liberty, and takes it into his Head, that all is mechanical, within, without, in Bodies and Spirits; for on occasion he deliberates, and examines a Thing on all Sides, and according to its Importance and Interest with him, he will rather suspend

fuspend his Judgment, than decide rashly. He is pleased with his own Precautions; esteems those who use him well; thinks he is obliged to Gratitude; hates the Ungrateful; complains of Injustice, Unpoliteness, and Haughtiness; condemns those he thinks he ought to complain of; loves to make them odious; attacks them where he can; displays their Faults, and loads them sometimes with Reproaches. What a Farce is this, if this be all a Machine! It would be as well to compliment the North-Wind, and quarrel with the South, when we want one, and are crossed by the other. When you abuse a Pyrrhonian, how can he complain, if nothing be unjust? But they are all accustomed to contradict themselves; they laugh at the Credulity, but they ought not by their Principles, since they say, nothing is ridiculous.

In vain did too light a Tincture of the Sciences, and too great a Precipitation in them, make Cicero take the Part of this Uncertainty: He often returned to himself, and the Voice of Nature, and owned some Truths were

irrefistible (f).

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When a Man is once resolved to persevere in this Way of Thinking, and despises others, who advise him against it, it would be equal Folly to talk with him. We may confine a Man, that has the Madness to endeavour the tearing out of his bodily Eyes; but what Tie can we have on one that would put out those of the Mind; who will always abuse his Liberty, and establish his Pleasure, and Glory upon it? We ought to leave, and contemn him. For nothing is more worthy of Contempt, than for a Man to arm himself against Evidence; to oppose the Principles of Reasoning by Reasons: Why do they conclude, if they have no Principles, and cannot draw a reasonable and good Consequence?

Would be look on these frantic Men with the Scorn they deserve, they would perhaps be ashamed of themselves; at least, those they have not spoiled, would be ashamed to admire them. But some Fire, Politeness,

Learn-

(f) Est quædam ita perspicua veritas ut eam infirmare nulla

Quanquam omnia alia falsa, incerta sunt, caduca, mobilia, Virtus est una altissimis defixa radicibus, qui nunquam ulla vi labesactari potest, nunquam dimoveri loco. Orat. pro P. Quint.

Learning, and especially a secret Corruption of Heart, and a Skill in disguising and colouring of Vice, makes them courted and applauded by many Men of a moderate De-

gree of Virtue.

A MAN may have carried this Pyrrhonism to its Height, and be incurable; when forced by an Evidence, that cannot be eluded without falling from one Contradiction to another, he still refuses to comply with it, on pretence that a more skilful Person might answer it. When a Perhaps of this Nature, that is the most dark and uncertain, overcomes the greatest Conviction, to go on in per-

fuading him, would be a Vanity like his own.

As to those who doubt, and are perplexed, from Fear, Weakness, Fancy, or Sophistry, they should be treated like Persons that are melancholy, and troubled in Mind. When Melancholy has deeply feized a Man, you must not directly Arike at his Foible, or draw him too hastily from it; but rather approach it at a Distance, and give him by degrees a little Amusement; at last, a favourable Moment may lead him from his Sadness to a Gleam of Joy; and then, do not let him flay too long upon it, but now and then return to it : thus by Steps he will have a Tafte of Pleasure; and when he is fomething fortified in it, then ask him, whether that be not better than a chagrin Humour, and exhort him to struggle with, and subdue it. Thus demand of an obstinate Pyrrhomist, whether he thinks, and exists, be pleased with doubting, or would rather quit it; whether he finds he is uncertain; whether it be true, he finds it; and when Pleafure succeeds to Pain, whether they are indifferent to him, or the last is the more agree-

IF the Pyrrhonists are in the right, Men are much obliged to those that have deceived them; and that, after having flattered themselves that they know, what they do not know at all, come at last to establish several Maxims, and pass them, as not liable to be doubted. Without these happy Errors, we should live without Principle, or Rule; and there would be no Light, Instruction, or Proof, which we should not be ready to give up to the first Conceit we should entertain. For why should we be disturbed about following what perhaps is good, and perhaps is not good? What Blame can be laid on a Man, that only gives up uncertain Maxims?

Chapter about the Source and Causes of a Pyrrhonism.
Way of Thinking that even yet prevails, and

is so reproachful to humane Nature.

CORPORAL Labour and the Necessities of Life were at first the chief Application of Men (g). But when good Husbandry, Inheritances, and Acquisitions, had eased many Men of hard Labour, some gave themselves up to Esseminacy; others, more active, took a Pleasure in Hunting; War succeeded the Chase; smaller States were founded; and great Empires arose from a Conjunction of them. But before and since the Foundation of those States, the most excellent Genius's took care to perfect their Reason, and Knowledge. Hence they became insensible to the Pleasures and Amusements, that divide and vitiate others, and distinguished themselves by their Wisdom and Integrity: both of which made them serviceable to others, and considerable in Society.

THE Greeks, who were naturally active and ambitious, and were parted into many small Republicks, observing that these improved Genius's were esteemed and advanced, recommended the Sciences to the Study of their Children. The wise Philosophers, and then the presumptuous Sophists, were entrusted with this Care: some were content with the Glory of serving their Country, and others were paid for their Labour. Thus the Education of Youth having become an Employment, Men were desirous to be eminent in this as well as others. They that discovered a new Thought or Method, had the Pleasure of seeing their Names im-

mortalized, and carried by their Difciples (h).

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those who deny a Providence, (de Nat. Deorum, Lib. 1.) is more applicable to the Pyrrhonists. In primisque magna dissensio est; eaque nisi dijudicetur, in summo errore necesse est homines, atque in maximarum rerum ignoratione versari. — quorum si vera sententia est, qua potest este pietas? qua sanctitas? qua religio? — quibus sublatis, perturbatio vita sequitur, & magna confusio. Atque haud scio, an pietate adversus Deos sublata, sides etiam & societas humani generis, & una excellentissima virtus, justitia tollatur. If what they pretend be right, there is no Religion, nor Piety, Justice, or Ties among Men: So that Society must fall into Consusion and Disorder.

⁽h) Graci homines contentionis cupidiores quam veritatis.

THUS it was that Men gave into Novelties; Disputes arose from Diversity of Sentiments; this amused the Auditors, and obliged the Vanity of the Actors in them. Now nothing could be more new, than to doubt of every thing; or more shining in a Dispute, than to combat all that had been, or could be faid about it. And it had this Advantage, that they could not be answered by retorting, or beaten by their own Weapons. Their Words could not be laid hold on to catch them; for they embraced no Opinion; what they affirmed to day, they denied to morrow: they advanced it not as a Truth, but as a Difficulty; fo they had the Pleasure to overcome, without being exposed to be conquered in their turn, and could have no

Reprifals made upon them.

THE Pyrrbonists put themselves in Credit, by taking the Honour of some illustrious Names, which they abused. As the Ignorant and Credulous are more than the Knowing and the Judicious, a small Share of good Fortune, and bold speaking, will be sufficient to impose on Multitudes. Many Sophists, eager of Applause, or Profit, readily decide on all things that are proposed. They are afraid of having it faid, they met with a Difficulty, or Hefitation: True Philosophers, abhorring the Vanity and Folly of these Pedants, took the other Side, and spoke on known Subjects, as if they would again deliberate upon them with others. Instead of pronouncing magisterially upon them, like those Dogmatists, (as they were called) they rather seemed willing to be instructed; they put Questions to those that had inquired of them before, and led them infenfibly to the Discovery of what they wanted to know. This Modesty was misinterpreted to be a Sign of doubting, and as an Effect of their Ignorance: and perhaps it was by some overstrained, it being common for the Mind of Man to go from one Extremity to another.

CERTAIN it is, even now a just Aversion for these Pedants that affect to know every thing, tho' they know almost nothing, hinders Great Men from taking an Air of Confidence on the most known and undoubted Sub-

jects.

A POSITIVE Spirit is the more contemptible, as it is the Character of Men of an inferior Genius, who see nothing beyond their Prejudices, Interests, and Customs: A Man must have an Extent, and a Force of Mind to know how to doubt and fuspend his Judgment properly. But it is a Weakness to be ever doubting; Men excuse themthemselves by this from the Pain of discerning Certainty from the contrary, which requires great Attention and Difficulty (i).

AMAN

(i) The Sects that oppose the Knowledge of Men, do it chiefly by the Uncertainty, and Weakness of our Senses: For since we know all things by their Report and Intervention; if they deprave or alter what they bring to us from without, if their Light is obscured in its Passage to the Soul, we have nothing else to lay hold on. Hence arise all those Fancies, that every Subject has in it; all we meet with in it; that it has nothing of what we think we find in it; and that of the Epicureans, that the Sun is no bigger than we view it.

Quicquid id est, nihilo fertur majore figura, Quam nostris oculis quam cernimus esse videtur.

LUCRET. V. 577.

That the Appearances, which represent a Body large to him who is near it, and smaller to one more remote, are both true.

Nec tamen hic oculis falli concedimus hilum; Proinde animi vitium hoc oculis adfingere noli.

Id. IV. 386.

And positively, that there is no Deceit upon the Senses; that we must lie at their Mercy, and seek out Reasons elsewhere, to excuse the Difference and Contradiction we find in them. They will make all other Matters to be Lies and Resveries, rather than accuse the Senses; to that Height are they arrived. Timagoras swore, that in pressing or distorting his Eye, he never perceived the Light of the Candle to be doubled; but that the Appearance came from the Fault of Opinion, not of the Organ. The greatest Absurdity of the Epicureans is to disown the Force and Essect of the Senses.

Proinde quod in quoque est his visum tempore, verum est s

Et si non potuit ratio dissolvere causam,

Cur ea qua fuerint juxtim, quadrata, procul sint

Visa rotunda: tamen prastat rationis egentem

Reddere mendosè causas utriusque figura,

Quàm manibus manisesta suis emittere quoquam,

Et violare sidem primam, & convellere tota

Fundamenta, quibus nixatur vita salusque.

Non modò enim ratio ruat omnis, vita quoque ipsa

Concidat extemplò, nisi credere sensibus auss,

Pracipitesque locos vitare, & catera qua sint

In genere hoc sugienda.

Ibid. 502.

A M A N has been perhaps too hasty; at first he has been fond to know an infinite Number of Things; and instead of pursuing chiefly what are most effential, and important, and clear, (supposing we have an equal Relish for Simplicity, as for the false Glare, and the Subtilties, that are out of their proper Place,) we give up ourselves to a thousand Questions, that might well enough be omitted, and whose Principles we do not know. Hence it is that Doubts, Disputes, and Uncertainty arise. The Dogmatists promise us Light, and often send us away in Dark-The Pyrrhonists, who are too peevish and impatient, because they do not at first view Things, as they defire,

This desperate and unphilosophical Advice only tells you, that humane Knowledge cannot be maintained, but by Absurdity and Folly; and that it is better for a Man to improve himself by making use of that, or any other the most fantastical Remedy, than to disavow his necessary Stupidity, a Truth so disadvanta. geous. His Senses must be the sovereign Masters of his Knowledge; but they are uncertain, and liable to be falsified in all Circumstances. Here he must fight it out; and if just Weapons fail him, as they do, he must employ Conceit, Rashness, Impudence. If this Epicurean Maxim be true, that we have no Knowledge; if the Appearances of Sense be false; or if that Stoical Hypothesis be true, that those Appearances of Sense are so false, that they cannot produce in us any Knowledge at all, we must conclude, on the Strength of these two great Sects of Dogmatifts, that there is no Knowledge at all. Montagne, Book II. Chap. XII.

This Fancy of Carneades, which is fo daring, in my Opinion at first arose from the impudent and unmeasurable Pride of the Pretenders to Knowledge. Afop was exposed to Sale, with two other Slaves; the Buyer inquired of one, what he knew; he, to raife his own Value, answered, that he knew a thousand furprifing Things: the second made the like Reply. When he came to Esop, and put the same Question to him, he told him, he knew nothing; for the former had left nothing for him to know. This is the Case in the School of Philosophy; the Pride of those who ascribe an universal Capacity to the Mind of Man, created this Opinton in others, out of Distaste and Emulation, that it is capable of nothing. The one hold the fame Extreme in Ignorance, which the others hold in Science: fo that it is plain, that Man is immoderate in all things; and that he is under no Check, but Necessity, and an Incapacity of going farther. Ibid. Book III. Chap. XI.

condemn themselves to make no Use of their Eyes at

all (k).

THE Sciences as yet were in their Birth. A happy Talent of Nature supplied the Place of Logic, and few Rules of it were known. In Physic, Conjectures were not made good by Experiments; nor was a just Collection of Phænomena formed before they ventured on the Principles, that should afterwards have explained them. They had no System of Morality, but discerned Virtue from Vice only by Taste and by Instinct. Yet in these weak Beginnings, they went into a thousand very solemn Questions; they boldly decided upon a Variety of Cases, whose Principles were not fufficiently known. Are we then to wonder, that all the Questions were perplexed, and thereby an Advantage put into the hands of the Pyrrhonists? But are we at prefent in the fame Condition; and has all our Attention, Experience, Method, and Precaution, tended only to convince, that we can know nothing? We have now a greater Right to fay, what Cicero declared in his Time (1); Because when Knowledge was new, Men spoke with Hesttation, like those who brought it first to Light, must we therefore ever talk as uncertainly, after the greatest Spirits, during so many Ages, have studied to clear and enlarge it?

IV. I'm must be owned, that many Dispofitions among Men favour this doubting Causes of it.

Temper, and make them satisfied with Probability, without putting them to the Trouble of being

certain.

First, It is a great Difficulty to separate Truth from Error, and Certainty from Probability; it requires Attention, Time, Order; and the Heart of Man loves to be at Ease from Pain and Difficulty. Man is a Creature formed for Society, and because in the Conduct of his Life, he finds himself every Moment obliged to act, before he has Time to be well instructed; and fince often he meets with a Multiplicity of Circumstances, and has not Leisure to deliberate, or see justly, what is the best of many Objects, that present themselves; in speculative Matters,

(k) Audi quantum mali faciat nimia subtilitas: Illi non praferunt lumen per quod acies dirigatur ad verum. Isti oculos mihi estodiunt. Sen. Ep. LXXXVIII.

(1) Quòd si illi tam in novis rebus, quàm modò nascentes hæstrarunt, nihilne tot sæculis, summis ingeniis, maximis studiis explicatum putamus? Cic.

he is content with mere Probability, from a Habit he has acquired of following no other Light in Matters of Practice.

In early Years, the Minds of Men are not formed to examine Things in that Order, and with that Precaution, that is requisite to give an Assurance of them. Then the Manner of Education of Youth commonly makes that Discernment impossible; they are very often incapable of it, till they quit their Masters, who never had the Command of it themselves, and know nothing of it; but then, by ill Luck, they are careless of it, because they have already taken a wrong Biass.

MEN are naturally fond of talking; they who are the most talkative pass for the most knowing, in the Opinion of many; and are frequently applauded for it by Self-Love, when they have been heard a long Time. Now probable Knowledge is sufficient for this End: for the very Time required for a nice and profound Examination is slow in bringing on a Facility of Expression, and an

Affluence of Words.

THE Mind of Man is likewise very light, and unfleady; Education and Habit may add to that; but certain it is, this is a reigning Defect: Therefore it must conquer itself. It will cost many Efforts to dwell long on the same Subject, trace over its Steps, review what it has acquired, and connect it with the Additions to it. Now all these Cares are necessary to get a certain Knowledge

of Things.

THE Evils that follow upon thinking differently from the Mode or Custom; a Constraint of living by the Sentiments of others, is the Cause, that instead of Certainty, we are in love with a slight Probability; we make it a Law to be content with it: Thus we lose our Taste of Evidence, and become disposed to Scepticism. Teachers that are haughty and ignorant, are often the Cause, that Men believe nothing, while they are desirous to impose a Sla-

very upon them of believing every thing.

Bur nothing is at last comparable to the Fatigue of beginning all asresh: We are frightened at the very Idea of a Toil of this Nature. A Man must have an extraordinary Courage, and an invincible Love of Truth, to overcome it. Yet as Men are obliged to form their sirst Studies, and in the Disorder that arises to them from the imperious Authority of the greatest part of Masters, who exact a service Dependance of their Scholars, they cannot acquire a sure and regular System, unless they return to

their former Steps, and resume their antient Principles and Elements, to clear by degrees the Perplexity in which they find themselves. And when they are used to study without Examination, it is not easy to change it. So that they rather incline to believe nothing, because they will not

fearch into any thing as they ought to do.

As very few set up the Truth for their only or principal View, tho' so worthy in itself, and so worthy of God, (m) who is the Source of it, so few will take the needful Pains to know it: They are content to pass for knowing Men, without the Reality of it; and all they wish, is to be thought so by others. Now Men arrive at this Endquite otherwise by not examining, than by taking that Labour; for they who have read, talk, remark, and remember the greatest Variety of Subjects, are usually looked upon as the most knowing.

But is it possible to get a Name, when in the Learning we value ourselves upon, the False is so mingled with the True? Very easily; for of the many that decide upon Reputation, sew can discern the Solid from the Pro-

bable.

MEN afpire to Places and Preferments; procure them as far as possible; pursue their Fortunes, Riches, and Pleasures. Employed and distracted about so many Things, different from true Knowledge, what Advance can they make in it? Nor do they reproach themselves with a Negligence of searching after Truth, as soon as Vol. II.

Socrates was the Scourge of this fort of People; and it was to make their Pride more contemptible by his Modesty, that he said, I know but one Thing, which is, that I know nothing; this has been the said in their course Favour.

abused by the Pyrrhonists in their own Favour.

⁽m) When the Sciences were in their Infancy, the Affectation of universal Knowledge was even then fashionable. Cicero (de Orat. Lib. III.) speaks of one Hippias, who pretended at the Olympic Games to be ignorant of nothing, either in the Liberal, or Mechanical Arts: He professed to be a Geometrician, a Mansician, a Poet, a Physician, &c. He made his own Cloaths, Shoes, &c. He wore nothing, even to the Ring on his Finger, that was not his own Work. Namque illos veteres doctores auctoresque dicendi nullum genus disputationis à se alienum putasse accepimus Ex quibus Eleus Hippias, cum Olympiam venisset, maxima illa quinquennali celebritate ludorum, gloriatus est, cuncta penè audiente Gracia, nihil esse ulla in arte rerum omnium, quod ipse nesciret, &c.

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they look upon the good Fate of being affured of it, to be

above the Stare of Mankind,

Why should a Man pass for a Wit and a Man of Learning, if he does not make his Advantage of the Reputation of it? It gives Admittance to Great Men, to their Tables, and their Pleasures. Is it not just to make a hand of a fortunate Genius? Why should not a Man reap the Fruits of his Labours? But then, does not he by this Chase of the Reward, cease to merit it? He loses the best Part of his Time, interrupts his Progress; and leaves it off, when he is most able to carry it on. But, says a Man of Pleafure and Fortune, why should I spend my Life in superfluous Endeavours, when the Mind can never get above Probability? The Exterior of Nature appears amufing, but when we would penetrate into their Secrets, her Charms vanish. Now it is in all the Sciences, as in that of Nature; we feed upon pleafing Illusions, but, on better Attention, we only advance to condemn the Steps we have taken. There are certain Bounds which we cannot touch upon, without entering into a Region full of Monsters, and Difficulties. Thus Men of Understanding and Reputation plead for their Idleness, and discourage the better Intentioned, by the panic Terrors they put into them.

THEY that purfue the Truth in good Earnest, but are of too flow or impatient a Temper, are angry that they do not at first meet with it; and still more, that they are disappointed of it from Time to Time; and in this Dishumour, looking on a Thing to be impossible, that is only difficult, they forfake a Defign that does not at the first

appear to flatter them with Hopes of Success.

OTHERS, whose Minds are equally vain, brisk, and penetrating, take fo much Pleasure in discovering the Mistakes of their Teachers, and furmounting, by this, the Masters they reverenced in their Youth, that, ensnared by this ambitious Pleasure, they resolve to put all the Pleafure of their Studies in confuting, and criticifing: thus they contract an unfortunate Habit of taking all things by the Reverse; of shutting their Eyes to the Truth, and turning them from Evidence, to the Glare of falle Lights. This generally happens to all litigious and wrangling Tempers. The exceffive Habit of Disputing, which they. acquire in the Schools, becomes by this means the most dangerous Rock they can iplit upon.

THE Airs of Authority which the greatest Part of Masters give themselves, may corrupt their Scholars in

more.

more Senses than one; and it must be owned, that it may eafily turn those, who do not love a fervile Submission, to the Side of Pyrrhonism. It is a great Satisfaction to a diffatisfied Scholar, to accuse his Matter of knowing nothing; and it is the foolish Vanity of a Teacher, who knows but little, and thinks he knows every thing, that feems to authorife this Pleafure; and it must be owned, that it makes it at least the more excusable.

In short, we have the Misfortune to be fet free at once from our Directors, at an Age, when the Paffions rule with the greatest Force; then, led on by their impetuous Movements, we deliver ourselves up to their seducing Pleasures, and are subject to these new Masters, with the more Agreeableness, and the less Reserve, as confidering all things to be doubtful, and knowing no certain Rules; and imagining, that this entitles us to make our Fancy our only Rule (n). We look upon ourselves to be above every thing, when we have once had the Courage to get above Religion; and it is the Triumph of our Pride, to regard that as a thing uncertain.

CORRUPTION of Heart is the great Principle of Pyrrhonism: We love to reconcile our Understandings and Inclinations (0); and a Man that gives himself up to the Impressions of the Senses, and the Wanderings of the Imagination, which have nothing fixed, does not blame him-VOL. II. felf

(n) Cicero looked upon Dispute as an Exercise very proper to qualify an Orator for speaking upon all Subjects that should offer.

Omnium bonarum Artium scriptores ac doctores & legendi & pervolutandi; & exercitationis causa laudandi, interpretandi, corrigendi, vituperandi, refellendi; disputandumque de omni re in contrarias partes, & quicquid erit in quaque re, quod probabile videri poterit, eliciendum atque dicendum. De Orat. Lib. I.

Ars enim earum rerum est, quæ sciuntur: Oratoris autem omnis actio opinionibus, non scientia continetur. Nam & apud eos dicimus, qui nesciunt, & ea dicimus quæ nescimus ipsi. Itaque & illi alias aliud iisdem de rebus & sentiunt & judicant; & nos contrarias sæpè causas dicimus, non modo ut Crassus contrà me dicat aliquando, aut ego contrà Crassum, cum alterutri necesse in fallum dicere ; sed etiam ut uterque nostrum eadem de re alias aliud defendat, cum plus uno verum esse non possit, &c. Lib. II.

Ego non quæro nunc, quæ sit Philosophia verissima, sed quæ

Oratori conjuncta maxime, coc. Lib. 111.

(0) Hoc habent inter cætera boni mores, placent fibi & permanent. Levis est malitia, sæpe mutatur, non in melius, sed inaliud. Sen. Ep. XLVII.

felf for Levities, when he is persuaded, there is no certain Rule, and while he lives at random, he congratulates himself on living regularly.

A M A N enters the World without Principle, without a System well connected and demonstrated; he finds himself unguarded against a thousand Seducements; and resembles one that goes unarmed into the Field of Battle.

RELIGION ought to be established on folid Foundations; for in shaking that, a Man must overturn every thing, and to difengage himfelf from it, he must doubt of all things: Now this is a Glory to him, that to obscure the Certainty of it, he must extinguish all other Truths. But the greatest Surprize is, that some, who are not debauched or licentious in Life, make a Difficulty of living with Decency, according to the Dignity of our Nature, and the Hopes of a better World. Perhaps the Meanneffes and Puerility with which Religion has been clogged, the Superstitions that are mixed with it, the useless Parts that have been added to it, the Austerity, the melancholy Air, the Constraint, that goes along with the first Instructions of it, given to Children, form Impressions in the Heart, that are not easily effaced, and incline a Man to Sadness, and Reluctance, when he is called by others, or moves himself to Devotion.

THE Machine is accustomed from its Infancy to hear Mass, or a Sermon, at certain Days and Hours; and all its Life long it keeps on the Practice, as a Man does of taking Snuff, or going to a public Place, where he often is tired, and gapes, as he does at a Sermon. Little Souls, who are commonly the most enslaved to Custom, eafily yield to this; and this alone, joined with some small Practices of the same nature, makes up all their Religion. But there are in the World, more elevated Spirits, that bear the Yoke of a flavish Custom with more Impatience; a Custom that does not recompence the Constraint by any reasonable Advantages. If Men of this Turn only know the Exteriors of Religion, and if they have been always proposed to them from their Infancy, as the capital Part, or almost the whole of it, they are in great Hazard of passing the rest of their Days without Religion, for want of knowing it.

Ir is certain, that the false Ideas we have of Religion from our Infancy, lead much to *Fyrrhonism*. At first, a Man persuades himself, without Proof, on the Force of hearing it repeated with a firm Tone, and an assured Air,

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that this and that is the true and most natural Sense of a Passage, and that this and that Maxim is effential to Religion. A Man perceives after that thefe pretended Truths, imbibed with our Milk, are incompatible with the pure Lights of good Sense: On this, he makes it a Duty to facrifice his Reason to some Prejudices, which he honours with the Name of Faith; but after having been some time accustomed not to reckon upon Evidence. he comes likewise not to reckon upon Obscurity; he abandons his pretended Faith, and all becomes uncertain in Religion, as well as in the Sciences.

AFTER a Man has been obliged from his Infancy to practife certain imaginary Duties, in which Superlition has a larger Share than Reason, he finds at last, that it is more contrary to good Sense, to figure to himself a Go D. who is pleased with these Grimaces, and is ready to punish the most dreadfully a Negligence of them; than one who gives up Men to their own Liberty, without demanding an Account of their Conduct. Superstition supposes a Meanness in GoD, Deism only supposes in him an Indifference, that is unworthy of his Wisdom. The tormer feems more incompatible to the Divinity, than the latter. So that a Man passes from an Extremity that is less probable, and extremely uneasy, to one where we find more Repose. The Heart naturally makes this Transition.

THERE would be tewer Libertines, and Religion would be embraced by all that have a little regard for Reason, if the Teachers of it were reasonable Men. What is mixed with it occasions Mistakes about it; and the more Men infift on what the Lord b has taught them, they find the Essentials of Religion pressed down by Externals, that are too much regarded: and fome, who reason too precipitately, carry their Conclusions too far, and by degrees fortake the effential Part, by the reasonable Pleasure they

take in rejecting the superfluous (p).

ONE

After the Example of our Holy Guide, many have bore the Cross out of Devotion. It is credibly reported, that King Al socia monta agrin am S. Lewis

⁽p) I think there is more Barbarity in eating a living Man, than a dead one; in torturing, roasting, and casting to the Dogs and the Swine, a fenfible Body, (as we have read, and lately feen among Neighbours and Fellow-Citizens; and what is worfe, under Pretence of Piety) than to roast and eat it after it is dead. Montagne, Book I. Chap. XXX.

ONE Cause of Pyrrbonism, is the Ignorance and Vanity of some Divines, who will not be suspected of Ignorance in what a Man may be capable of knowing, and having only glanced upon Philosophy, (with which sometimes they have no Cause to be well pleased) take Resuge in saying, that it cannot satisfy a reasonable Man; and do not well perceive, that by this Language they sacrifice the Interest of Truth, and of Religion in general, to that of

their Reputation, or their venerable Chimera's.

WHEN a Man has laid down a false Principle, he goes from Consequence to Consequence, and from Error to Error, till he comes to the most palpable Extravagances; but in the good Opinion which he has of himself, and prejudiced as he is in favour of all he has once concluded, he will retrench nothing; Doubt itself appears a want of Faith; and he will rather own, that Reason is often opposite to Truth, than be in Suspence about the Truth of a Consequence, which does not appear to be reasonable. In the mean time, Reason is the Foundation of all our Certainty; it demonstrates to us the Truth of Revelation,

and

S. Lewis wore a Hair-Cloth, till in his Old Age he had a Dispensation from his Confessor; and that every Friday he was beaten over the Shoulders by his Priest with five Iron Chains, which he wore in the Night for that Purpose. William, our last Duke of Guyenne, Father of that Eleanor who lest this Duchy to the Houses of France and England, always wore, in the 10 or 12 last Years of his Life, a Suit of Armour, under a Religious Habit, by way of Penitence. Foulques, Count of Anjou, went to Jerusalem, to be scourged there by two of his Servants, with a Rope about his Neck, before the Sepulchre of our Lord. Even now, every Good Friday, you see many Men and Women in several Places, beat themselves till they tear off their Flesh, and strike to their very Bones. This I have often seen, without Witchcrast. Ch. XL.

I saw, some Years ago, a Dean of S. Hilary of Poictiers, driven to that Solitude by the Force of his Melancholy, that when I entered his Chamber, it was two and twenty Years since he had been out of it; and he had all his Actions, and his Health, free and easy, except a Defluxion of Rheum on his Breast. He would hardly suffer any to come in and see him, one Day in a Week: He was always shut up in his Chamber by himself, except a Servant, that brought him his Diet once a day, and only came in, and then went out again. His Employ was to walk about in his Room, and read a Book, (for he had some Learning) in a Resolution to stay till his Death in this Posture; which happened some time after. Book II. Chap. VIII.

PARTII. the Art of THINKING.

and affords us Rules for a fure Explication of it: So that to own that this, which appears abfurd and contradictory to him, when it makes use of all its Application, may yet be true, is to shake all our Knowledge, by sapping the Certainty of its Foundation; it is to overthrow Religion, and make it a Prey to Scruples, by a mistaken Zeal for

fome of its pretended Principles.

Humane Reason is little; it is blind; it is proud; say they, with much Gravity and Devotion, who judge of the Reason of all the World by the miserable State of their own. It is foolish to say, that Littleness and Vanity are the Appendages of Reason; which, on the contrary, enlightens us, and makes us at once both solid and modelt. The Little and the Vain, far from composing the reasonable Man, form purely the impertinent: A Man must have a good deal of Presumption to draw his own Picture himself, and say boldly, here is a just Picture of Reason, the greatest Gift of God; his shining Image; for we are wise, and please him, by Consequence, in Proportion as

we are reafonable.

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THIS infinite Abasement of Reason to Faith, has an Air of Zeal and Religion; the Tone and Air, with which this Parallel is made, imposes still upon the Ignorant; but the Divines, who are intrusted with the facred Depositum of Religion, ought to be more circumspect in Defence of it, and not by their blind Zeal and Imprudence, furnish Weapons to the Fanatic, and the Pyrrhonist. Montagne, who turns all in favour of his darling Hypothesis, speaks very devoutly in behalf of the Pyrrhoman, (Book II. Chap. XII.) How much more teachable and complying with the Laws of Religion, and Society, is the plain and incurious Mind, than those that are the Inspectors and Teachers of Causes divine and humane? The Invention of Man has nothing so probable and useful. It presents a Man naked and empty, acknowledging his natural Weakness; apt to receive any Impression from above; unadorned with humune Science; and therefore more fit to lodge the divine: Annulling its own Judgment, in order to give more Place to Faith; neither misbelieving, nor establishing any Maxim against the common Laws and Observances; humble, obedient, tractable, studious, sworn Enemy of Heresy, and by consequence, keeping clear of the vain and irreligious Opinions, introduced by the false Sects. It is a fair Paper, prepared to take any Character from the Finger of GOD. K 4

The more we commit ourselves to GOD, and renounce our-

selves, the more valuable we shall be to Him.

MADAM Des Houlieres has built upon the Principle of fome Divines, and their Contempt of Reason, a Moral. which their Severity, joined with some small Remainder of that Reason they so much decry, will never ap-

prove (9).

IF Reason is incapable of giving us Light into what is of most Consequence for us to know, we have no certain Rule at all; a Stroke upon Reason will fall upon Morality, and if it were not happily a Stroke in the Air, it would overturn the Principles of Virtue. If Reason be uncertain, Fancy will be a Law to us; fo that we shall have a Theology, to which Libertines will be much o-

bliged.

THE Fondness of knowing every thing, that of inventing; the Invectives used against Reason (r); Fanaticism; all combine to dispose us to Pyrrhonism. So likewise, the Disputes of the Learned dispose us to look on every Defign of instructing Men in the Grounds of Truth, to be too chimerical, and prefumptuous. Nothing is more overstrained, than this Consequence. Men dispute, without understanding themselves, or having well stated the Question; and they decide by Interest: Is it surprising, that they do not agree? But to conclude from hence the Necessity of Pyrrhonism, a Man must suppose there are some Defects which cannot be repaired. Many conduct their Studies amiss; therefore, if well conducted, they will have

⁽⁹⁾ Les Moutons, Idylle, & Reflex. diver. XIII. & XVII. Cependant nous avons, &c.

So weak is humane Reason, and so vain, That Brutes are better, happier far, than Man.

⁽r) It is properly a Chase of our Game. We are inexcusable to manage it wrong: but to fail of the Quarry, is another thing; for we are born to fearch after Truth: but to possess it belongs to a Greater Power. It is not, as Democritus said, hid in the Bottom of the Deep; but rather exalted to an infinite Height, in the Divine Knowledge. The World is nothing else but a School of Inquiry; it is not who shall win the Race, but who shall run it in the best Manner. He that speaks true may as well play the Fool, as he that speaks talle; for we are upon the Manner, not the Matter of speaking. Montagne, Book III. Chap. VIII.

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no better Success. This is absurd. Let a Man reflect on the Characters of those who usurp the Title of Learned; fome are ambitious, and mind nothing, but what leads to Preferment, or may perpetuate a Name: others are opinionated, who feel only two Pleasures, one of finding Fault, the other of never letting go their Hold: others are fervile Spirits, who, incapable of Elevation, gravely read to their Disciples, in an advanced Age, what they had flavishly written in their Youth, under Masters as worthless as themselves: Some of mean Extraction, who know nothing of Greatness of Soul, and the pure Love of Truth; fome weak Spirits, who, placed in their Vocations by Constraint, or reduced to chuse it by Necessity, trouble their Heads with a constant Effort of reading above their Capacity; fome, in short, who have no other Idea of Knowing, but of a Memory filled up with Collections, all Doctors, as they call them, are yet no more than Affes, loaden with Science (s). We find likewise among these Pretenders to Learning, some, who, unable to put ordinary Matters in a new and engaging Light, talk of nothing but Paradoxes; who defire to shine, rather than be useful; to appear, than to be learned; and are less concerned to avoid a Mistake, than to disguise it. Why should a Man despair to find the Truth, because some have missed it, who never fearched for it; and prefer a Passion for Money, Rank, Privileges, Wine, and Debauchery, to the Love of Truth? In the Disputes of those, who deserve a little better the Name of learned Men, there is more of Misconstruction in Words, than true Opposition of Sentiments; more apparent Distance, than real. Let a Man examine Things without Prejudice and Passion, and he will be convinced of the Truth of what I fay.

For want of a near Infight into those, who are called learned Men, we are surprized that they are mistaken, when we ought rather to be amazed, that they are no oftener erroneous than they are. Ignorance and Passion

give

⁽s) Efficit hoc Philosophia, medetur animis, inanes solicitudines detrahit; cupiditatibus liberat, pellit timores, sed hæc ejus vis non idem potest apud omnes. Fortes enim non modò Fortuna adjuvat,—— sed multò magis ratio, erc. Philosophus in ratione vitæ peccans, hoc turpior est, quod in officio, cujus Magister esse vult, labitur, artemque vitæ professus, labitur in vità, Cic. Tusc. Quest. Lib. II.

give Birth to an Opinion; Idleness and Interest make them adopt it; Time renders it awful, and at last a Man who has the Courage to examine it without Prejudice, discovers the Ridiculousness of it. If this had been so examined at its first Rife, had that Examination been looked upon as a Proof, that the Mind of Man is doomed to eternal Uncertainty? Would the Supineness of many Ages give Weight to a Proof, that in itfelf has none at all?

I F Men had it more at Heart to know clearly, than to contradict; and to find out the Truth by the Help of others. rather than disturb them in the Search they make, Difference of Opinions would occasion the founding of Things to the Bottom; and after having weighed them all calmly, a Man would fee better what he ought to embrace; he would join together all that is true in them, and discard

the contrary.

MANY learned Men of the XVth Century are accused of an Inclination to Pyrrhonism; and perhaps not unjustly; for the Perplexity Men were in, both in Divinity, and Philosophy, in that Age, may be the Cause, that Men of good Understanding, and Lovers of Truth, seeing it oppofite to all that was established and authorised for a great Length of Time, were discouraged, and took the Side of

Doubting. WHEN we fee Men of Learning agree fo little, jar with one another, and give way to Passions, that do them no Credit, we ought to conclude, that what they agree in, should be incontestable. Therefore let us distinguish this, take it for a Principle, and make use of it with all the Attention and Precaution imaginable, in order to go farther. I own, that the Prepoffessions, the Precipitancy, and Conceit of the Half-Learned, have created a great Confufion in the Sciences; I agree, that this is a Check to those, who would study in good Earnest, and makes them often stumble; but for all that, the Way is laid open, and tho' it be still roughened with Thorns, yet it is not impossible to clear them. Let us then difintangle ourselves by degrees, as far as we can. If we do not advance a great deal, let us be content to advance a little, but furely, and not lazily: our Posterity will finish the rest. Had every Man, fince the first Entrance of Philosophy, without troubling himself about the Length of his Progress, proposed to himself the clearing of one Part of it, without leaving any Error in it, it would be much easier to carry it on; and even in beginning, we should find ourselves advanced

vanced forward. Let us religiously do in favour of our Posterity, what our Predecessors have neglected to do for us; let us amend by their Faults; study their Rules; make them familiar to us; follow those more scrupulously; and before we say, they could not draw the Truth from that deep and gloomy Bottom, where she lies concealed, therefore none can draw it from thence: let us endeavour to make use of longer Cords, and employ such Vessels as are less brittle; that is, let us improve on the Assistances,

which they neglected (t).

WHEN some Pyrrhonists, who pretend to be more reafonable than others, fay, with an Air of Modesty and Caution, they dare not account any Proposition to be true, but own many to be probable; they do not furely attend to what they fay: for can they think a Proposition comes near to Truth and Certainty, if they have no Idea of them, or of the Marks of either? If they have a Rule, by which they examine a Proposition, they know that Rule, and diffinguish what approaches to it from what is more remote. But if they know neither a Rule, nor its Application, then they know not whether one Thing be more probable than another. All is uncertain to them; and perhaps it is not less unjust to maintain their Parents, than to kill them. If they understand, that what they take fo much Trouble not to believe, should pass for probable, I ask, whether this be the Effect of Evidence, or some Inclination for it? This should make its Truth suspected, far from giving a Probability to it. But if an Evidence we can hardly refift, makes a Proposition appear to be pro-

⁽²⁾ We may be allowed to fay, that the Sciences are still in their Infancy; either because they could be no more than very imperfect among the Antients; or that we have almost entirely lost the Traces of them, during the long Darkness of Barbarism; or because Men did not take good Methods in them, till about an Age ago. If we take an Historical View of the Advance they have already made in so small a Space, against the talse Prejudices that have opposed them from all Parts, the Obstacles of Authority and Power, the prevailing Coldness to uncommon Points of Knowledge, the small Number of those, who are devoted to it; and the Weakness of the Motives, that have engaged them to it; we should be associated at the Greatness and Rapidity of their Course, we should see all of them newly sprung from nothing, and perhaps should be too sanguin in our Hopes of attaining them. Hist, de l'Acad, de Sci. An. 1699. Pres.

bable; that which will put it out of our Power not to be fatisfied with it, will make a Proposition more than probable; it will make it certain; and this Evidence we find in a great number of Propositions, if we will be attentive to them.



CHAP. V.

Of PRINCIPLES.

A Principle and Problem.



I. I HEN by a moderate Attention to the two Terms that compose a Proposition, we find at first their Relation to one another, and fee by that, whether we ought to affirm or deny it;

if the first Term contains the second, or the Exclusion of it, that Proposition is called a Principle. But when we are to reason, and use a third Idea to shew the Relation of the Subject and Attribute, that is called a Problem.

II. IF the Mind could not be fure of many Propositions, without the help of any There are Principles. Proof, it would be impossible to be certain

of any thing. For fince every Proof is expressed by a Proposition, that wants to be proved itself by another, nothing could have been ever, in that Cafe, demonstrated from the Beginning of the World. But we need only be fenfible of ourselves, and reflect on our own Experience, and what passes within us, to be convinced, that many Propositions deserve the Name of a Principle. The Whole is greater than its Part: What acts, exists: It is impossible a Thing should be and not be at the same Time, &c. wal / latitofish ne salm

THE Facility with which all Men form certain Ideas; the Necessity they find they are in, to affent to the Propofitions that are made up of them, plainly prove, that the Author of Nature has defigned that we shall take them for

of distinguithment them. As Present of the Line 1699. 1999.

the Rules and Principles of our Notions.

III. SINCE all obscure Questions are cleared by the means of Principles, it would feem, that it would be the best way to make a great Collection of them, to engrave them in the Memory, and to have them always

How we must furnish ourselves with Principles.

ready and familiar, for our Occasion (u). But on better Thoughts, we shall find this Advice more specious than necessary. For, 1. They are not connected, and dependant one upon another: fo that it is not easy to remember them. 2. They are too numerous; and while we learn many, we must overlook a multitude of others. 3. The Care we must take to render them familiar, will be an Hindrance to other more effential Precepts; as those of doing all in order, and exact Consequence. 4. All Questions, that are a little compounded, are oftener decided by the Conclusions that have gone before them, than by the first Principles; which are only applied to the most fimple Ouestions; fo that their Use is not so extensive as we suppose it. 5. When we have attained the Method, which we shall explain in the Fourth Part of this Book, that is, the Manner of examining, and confidering a Question, this will foon create in the Mind fuch Principles, as are necesfary to the clearing of it; whether it has already known them, or they were not in our Thoughts before.

IV. FORMERLY, when Skill in Difputes, that is, Facility in Difputing, passed for the most beautiful Flower of Philosophy, and the most shining Fruit of our Studies, nothing could be more convenient, than to have at hand, upon all disputable Matters,

Whether general Propositions alone merit the Name of Principles.

certain Principles, which were agreed upon, and were called Canons. This was current Money, which it was not allowable to refuse; and when a Man was attacked by this Battery, he durst not use a Negative; but was obliged, in order to his Defence, to turn and puzzle his Brain, to find out some Distinctions. These Canons, that they might be applied to a great number of Cases, were expressed in general Terms; they were loose and indeterminate Propositions; and this is one Cause why it has been thought, that all particular Notions are drawn from the general. The Bigotry to Words, which is so ordinary among Men, and especially among the Schoolmen, has involved them in

^{(&}quot;) See the Log. of Mrs. Clauberge, Gaffendi, & Mariotte.

this Error. After having faid, that a particular Proposition is always contained in a general one, they took this Maxim in a literal Sense, and concluded, that all we know on determinate Subjects, is drawn from general Propofitions, as we draw a Book from a Library, and a Difcourfe from our Memory. But nothing is more false: for the general are from the particular, on the contrary. We fay, a certain Body is divisible, before we think in general, that all Body is fo: We measure two Lengths with the same Ell, and by that conclude they are equal, before we fay in general, Things that are equal to a Third, are equal to one another. And an evident Proof, that determinate Propositions are more natural to us than the general, is, that to clear up the latter, we always descend to Examples, that is, to the particular. I do not fay, that general Propositions are Conclusions, that draw all their Certainty from the particular, which we collect to form them; for a Collection of these seldom makes an universal Proposition; but that the Ideas of determinate Objects, affembled in the Mind, are the Occasions of our passing by degrees to Ideas more general, and at last, to form the universal abfolutely from them. But we know the Truth of an universal Proposition, to which we arrive by Steps, when we fee its Attribute contained in a Subject that is univerfal. and not by running thro' all the Particulars, to which it is applicable.

The a general Proposition should contain effectually all the Particular, to which it is applicable, we should see them in it; for a Proposition is composed of Ideas; Ideas are conscious Acts; and by Consequence, we see all that these Acts are, and all they contain. But we pass from the View of a general Proposition to the Discovery and the View of one that is particular, if this be drawn from it, as having been contained in it, and so we pass from one to the other; because we must carry on an uniform Way of

Thinking on like Subjects.

AFTER the same Manner we may, and do really pass from the View of a particular Proposition, to the View of another, that is like it. But as determinate Objects contain many Differences, with some few like Attributes, and so may resemble in one Sense, and may be opposite in another, these Differences may sometimes perplex, and give room to Disputes, and Evasions, and we shall maintain, that there is no Consequence from one Example to another, because they are not equal. It is for this Reason, that we prefer general

general Maxims, which have no Difficulty that perplexes us; and for the most part, we make it a Law to adopt them, and a Practice to apply them to particular Cases.

V. It is true then, that we have an Affurance of a determinate Proposition, independently of the general, that passes to contain it. We see that a Beam is less than an entire House; because we see in general, that the Idea of a Part denotes something

Whether there be a Proposition, that is the sirst Principle.

would.

finaller, than the Idea of the Whole; so far, that we did not think of it, when we supposed, that the Truth of particular Propositions depended on the Truth of those that are more general; and it is of no Use to fatigue ourselves about it, when upon that Supposition, we made a Search, among Principles, for the first and most universal, and that from

which all the rest were derived.

It is no Wonder, that Men do not agree about this first Principle, since at the Bottom there is no first at all; but all are equally first, all independent one upon another; all certain, by their proper Evidence; and since we have no need of another Proposition to see the Attribute of a Principle contained in its Subject. Every Man has pretended, that his is the first; and he would be right, if he had not called it so, to the Exclusion of others; for every Principle is independent; and as the same Evidence, that obliges us to receive the one as such, obliges us likewise to receive the others, we may pass from one to any we please; since we cannot, without a capricious Extravagance, yield to one Evidence, and yet refuse another, that is equally clear and convincing.

WHEN it is asked, what is the first Truth which a Man knows; if the Question be of Fact, it cannot be resolved. For, who can remember his first Affirmation, or Negation, and the Occasion of either? The first Rules we follow are not therefore the first Objects of our Knowledge, and we observe them without having ever reflected upon them. For Instance, we must assent to Evidence, is one of the first; but we assent to it, before we say that. So we truly affirm, that we see the Idea of the Attribute contained in the Idea of the Subject: We are a thousand times convinced, that we truly affirm this, because we see Things in this manner, without having ever reflected, that we affirm it in Consequence of that View. If, in disputing about the first known Truth, we mean the Order of Philosophising, beginning, or re-commencing our Studies, this

would be prefuming on ourselves too far; and affuming too much Authority to propose our own Example as a Law to others. I reflect, that I think, and would instruct my felf; I am fenfible, that I form Perceptions, that I collect them. &c. These Perceptions are conscious Acts; but fome only reprefent themselves to me, others fome different Thing. This is the Order I have followed in my Logic: If others have taken more convenient Methods, and have entered by other Avenues, I do not condemn them, or invite them to go back, in order to bear me Company in mine.

In what Sense Principles are

VI. THESE first Principles have received the Name of Axioms, a Greek Word, that fignifies Worth or Dignity; because common No- these Propositions are worthy of our Acquiescence in themselves. They deserve it by

their proper Evidence; and not that of Proofs, whereof they have no Necessity. They are likewife called common Notions; but we must not therefore think, they are so many Maxims, engraved in certain Corners of the Mind, which all know, when they read them within themselves. They who pretend this, fuffer themselves to be blinded by metaphorical Expressions, and have no Idea of what they fay. These Principles, which we admit without Hesitation, as foon as we understand them, are very numerous, almost to an Infinity: fo that many are not thought of by a multitude of Men. But what they have in common, that has given rife to the Expression, and the Fiction built upon it, is, that each Man is born with Faculties and Dispositions, that enable him eafily to form these first Ideas, and collect them to serve as Principles on occasion; to conceive, and admit them, as foon as others present themselves to them. Now this great Facility of comprehending them, as foon as we hear them pronounced, tho' it be the first time, makes us put them in the Rank of Things we have known already; because we know them with the same Clearness and Ease, with which we are accustomed to repeat what we have learned before. This is an usual Fault of the Mind of Man, to overftrain Resemblances, and confound together fuch Things, as are fomething like one another. But from this, that Principles are as familiar as what we have long known, to conclude, that we are born with them, is to give into a Chimera, fomething like that of the Platonics, who imagine, that all our Knowledge is only Reminiscence; a Revival of what we have known in another Life,

Life, but have forgotten. There is no part of Knowledge which we may not, in applying ourselves to it, and often tracing it over, make as familiar to us as common Notions.

When I say, that we are born with these Faculties and Dispositions, I do not mean, they are in all, or every Man, at all Times, in an equal Degree. For some have naturally more Vivacity, Penetration, and Extent of Mind, than others; which improve by Exercise. So that it may be a Principle to one, which to another wants to be proved. He that is Master of those Qualities, the most immediately forms Ideas of the Subject and Attribute, extensive enough to see the second contained in the first; but another will have need of Help and Intervention from some third Ideas, to discover the Relation of these two. One counts upon his Fingers, to assure himself that 3 times 9 are 27; another as readily and evidently sees it as he does, that 3 times 2 are 6; so that the Word Principle is often Relative.

VII. THE Itch of establishing a first
Principle, on which all the other should depend, has introduced the Method of proving
Principles.

one Principle by another, that is pretended to be more evident. This is a needless Trouble, and may give Way to fatal Habits of Thinking. It is dangerous to accustom ourselves to search for Proofs of Principles, because it inures us to turn our Eyes from the Evidence we have, in design to look after another that is greater. Now it is dangerous to make a Practice of doubting on what is certain, and turning our Attention from what is clear: this inclines us to Chicanry, and Pyrrbonism.

But when Men will agree to these Principles, what must be done? It is often fruitless, as I have said, to recur to Proof, that cannot be clearer than the Principles themselves; but as they, who refuse to admit them, only do it by a Heaviness of Understanding, or by Obstinacy, you must take a different Method, according to either of these Cases.

WHEN a Man only wants Penetration, we must explain the Terms of a Proposition to him, and make him repeat them to himself, putting the Definition in the place of the Thing defined. When the Sense of these Terms is compounded, we must separate the Notions that compound it, make him attend to each apart, collect them one after another, and go over them often again, if necessary, to render them the more familiar and obvious. The under-Vol. II.

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flanding of the Sense of them will infallibly lead him to

acknowledge the Truth of them.

Bur if Obstinacy be the Case, against these Lights, we must, for a Moment, look upon that Principle to be false, that a Man is obstinate in rejecting. From this we will conclude, that the contrary is true; from this Conclusion, as from a true Principle, we will draw a Confequence; from that another; and so a third; till we come to a Proposition so agreeable to the Principles we draw it from, and yet so absurd, that it is not possible to assent to it. This Method, especially when it is not accompanied with Raillery, and Infult, is entirely proper to reduce those who are not irrevocably perverse, from a Pleasure they take in it; for against these there is no Remedy, and a Man of Sense would do himself an Injustice to converse with them. As to what remains, the Art of drawing Confequences in this Manner, which we foresee our Antagonist will contradict, this, like many others, is a Matter of Practice, rather than Precept. To attain it, a Man must be a perfect Master of what he handles, and know exactly the Matter, as to the Principles and Confequences of them.

VIII. We distinguish Principles into The Division Theoretical, and Practical: the first only of Principles. regard Speculation, and barely present a Truth; as, Two Things, that resemble a Third, have also some Resemblance to one another. The second tend directly to Practice, they either regulate, or infinuate it; as, Benefits deserve Acknowledgment; Friendship is worthy of a Revurn. This Distinction lays down nothing but what is true; and yet it is not the less superfluous. The Truth of practical Principles is known in the same Manner, as that of Principles purely speculative. A Man that has formed an Idea of a Benefit, that knows the Force of the Words Merit, and Acknowledgment, sees that the last is contained in the Number of those Things, that a Benefit deserves; or, that to merit Acknowledgment



ment, is one Consequence annexed to the Idea of a Be-

CHAP. VI.

Of PREJUDICES.

VOL. II.

E confound many false Pro- The Definipositions with common No- tion. tions; we affent to them

unexamined, and found our Reasonings upon them, on all Occasions. As true Principles are the Source of all that is true

in our Conclusions; fo false Principles, placed instead of the true, are the principal, and almost the only Cause of all our Mistakes.

WE call these Prejudices, that is, Judgments that are precipitate, formed before the due Time, before we exactly know the Things they turn upon.

II. SOME Men in their Infancy, and The Origin of many during their whole Life, judge only of Things by the Report of the Senses.

Now, we have observed, that our Sensations do not give us just Ideas of Things. Therefore we must not be surprized, if, when we do not know them, and suppose them different from what they are, we attribute to them what is not fuitable. Language falling in with thefe false Suppositions, serves to countenance them, and on the Strength of repeating fome Propositions, which we at first embraced without Examination, we make them fo familiar, that we take them at last for common Notions, and Principles of good Sense. Custom gives them a Force entirely like that, which true Principles draw from their Evidence.

By this means, what we call our Notions, become a Mixture of true and false Principles; and by Consequence, of Mistakes and Demonstrations, as we have followed the one or the other of these Principles.

III. WE must necessarily unravel this The Remedy Confusion, or, in a just Fear of having emagainst them. braced as many Errors as Truths, remain in Suspence and Uncertainty. Descartes thought, that we must doubt of every thing, for this purpose. This has occasioned a terrible Outcry, tho' it has nothing in it that is offensive: if he means only that we must examine all we have espoused as true, from our first Infancy, and from such Masters to whose Authority we have submitted, with

the Care that is owing to doubtful Questions.

THEY who recommend this doubting at the Entrance of Philosophy, do not give a sufficient Attention to the Force of this Precept, and what is needful to put it in Practice; for, I. We must range in Order all the Propositions that are necessary to be examined. Now to distribute all these in their proper Classes requires a great Ability, and is none of the smallest Fruits of Philosophy. 2. We have many Prejudices, and precipitate Conclusions, which demand Meditation, Art, Skill, and acquired Talents to discuss. So that if a Man must begin with this Review, he must be a Philosopher, before he can become one.

Bur the reasonable Sense of it is, that when in Study we meet with a Proposition that has not been sufficiently examined, whether we have admitted it as a Principle, or as a Conclusion, we must stop at it, till we have sitted it without the least Prejudice, and always fet apart what has not yet been the Object of this Severity. But by what Art shall we justly discern true Principles from Prejudices? (x) 1. We must examine whether the Terms that compose the Principle, which is true, or pretended to be true, express some Ideas, or simple Sensations. 2. We must define each Term, put the Definition in the place of the Thing defined, and compare them, and fee whether one be comprehended in the other. Then, if the Proposition be a Principle, the Mind will be possessed of its Evidence; if a Prejudice, we shall see that it signifies nothing, or contains no reasonable Meaning. For Instance, it is a Prejudice, that the more weighty a Body is, the more real it is. Now, what is a Body? It is Extension. What is Weightiness? It is a Motion to descend. Therefore, Extention

Interest inter humanæ mentis Idola, & divinæ mentis Ideas,

⁽x) Frustra expectatur augmentum in Scientiis ex superinductione novorum super vetera, instauratio facienda est ab imis sundamentis, nisi libeat perpetuò circumvolvi in orbem cum exili & quasi contemnendo progressu. Lord Bacon, Nov. Org. Lib. I.

Idola Tribus sunt fundata in ipsa natura humana, atque in ipsa Tribu seu gente hominum, &c. Ibid. 59, 45, 46. (de Intellectu, & sensibus.)

PARTIL the Art of THINKING.

tension which descends is more real than that which rifes. We want no more to convince ourselves of it, but to take for a Principle, what is only a Prejudice, without Founda-

tion or Evidence.

IV. THE famous Chancellor Bacon, who lived in an Age, when Men loved to Division. fpeak after an extraordinary Manner, and

who had accustomed himself to it, from the Schools, has imposed fingular Names on Prejudices, which have something mysterious, but at the same time ingenious, folid,

and grand.

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I. HE calls them Idols. Indeed as Idols, who are nothing at all, are put in the place of the real and true Go p. fo we very often give to Prejudices, which have commonly no Meaning, an Acquiescence due only to true Principles, and pay them a Respect which we ought to reserve to the pure Light of evident Notions, whereof the CREATOR is the Source. The Lister over the

2. As many of our Prejudices arise from certain Dispofitions common to all Men, he calls those of that kind, Idola Tribus; that is, of the Tribe of Adam, of Mankind, as not being peculiar to this or that Person, but common to the whole Species. Of this Class are, to judge of the Reality of Objects by their Impression upon the Senses; to judge of others by ourselves; to endeavour to conceive every thing in a bodily Manner, and confound Thought with Extension. These Prejudices, that arise from Man's Dependance upon the Senses, set him at a distance from believing an Eternal and Almighty Intelligence. When we recover from these Prejudices, we shall perceive the trifling of those, who smile at the Mention of Pores, subtile Matter, the Weight of the Air, &c.

THERE are certain Errors, which have been of long flanding, and have been always coming about again, tho' fometimes in a different Shape; because they spring from certain Dispositions, that have ever reigned in the Heart The Heart is impatient and cruel; hence are Infolence and Perfecution. The Pagans could not endure the Christians; and Christians have been still less able to

endure one another.

I r is natural for a Man to overstrain, and be missed by fomething extraordinary. Hence are the Distinctions of Meats and Dresses; the Desire of Solitude; voluntary Macerations, and other Effects of Melancholy. When the icrious Humour is attended with Folly, a Man believes himich

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himself to be either damned, or at least half inspired;

hence is all mystic Religion and Fanaticism.

MEN have been used to talk, as they have thought: and their Language once established and authorized by long Usage, has itself given Force to Prejudices. These are called by Bacon, Idola Fori; as if he had faid, Idols consecrated in a public Place. The current Language has procured them Entertainment. Thus we are bigotted to feveral Words that are very common, but fignify nothing at all, as, Fortune, Hazard, &c. Hence the negative Terms Immortal, Infinite, Immaterial, induce us to look upon what they express to be mere Negatives, tho' it be more positive and real than what they deny.

NOTHING is more unworthy of a Man, than thus, like Beafts, to follow the Herd that goes before them. Our Evils will always grow upon us, while we take that for a Rule which we know, rather than what we ought to do; and while a received Opinion shall have with us all the

Authority of Reason (y).

PROVIDED we think like others, we are content: It is not Error we fear, but only the Reproach and Shame of being deceived. When a Man goes to decide upon a Subject, without troubling himself to examine what it is, he only informs himself about what is said of it. The Error of another authorifes our own; and our own in its turn confirms that of others. The Mistake of one makes a public Mistake, and then it is consecrated, and particular Persons cannot retreat from it. Like Brutes, we follow the Herd, as being a part of it ourselves (2).

(y) Idola Fori omnium molestissima funt, quæ ex fædere verborum & nominum fe infinuarunt in Intellectum, co. Nov. Org. 59.

Tritissima quæque via maxime decipit; nulla res nos majoribus malis implicat, quam quod ad rumorem componimur; nec ad rationem, sed ad similitudinem vivimus, erc. Sen. de Vit, Beat. cap. 1.

(z) Cum de vitâ beatâ agitur, non est quod mihi illud discessionum more respondeas, Hæc pars major esse videtur; ided

enim pejor est, e. Ibid. cap. 2.

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Abstrahunt à recto divitiæ, honores, potentiæ, & cætera, quæ opinione nostra cara funt, pretio suo vilia, e. Sen. Ep. LXXXI. Quam multa paramus, quia alii paraverunt, &c. Ep. CXXIII. Quaramus quid fint, non quid vocentur.

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ALL Men are not of the same Temperament, and we are not all educated in the same Manner. Therefore when, by Dispositions that are particular to them, they assent, without being obliged to it by Evidence, to Propositions fuitable to their natural Bent, or ruling Habits, he calls these Prejudices, Idola specus; he considers them as Idols niched in the Corners and Recesses of the Mind, which vary according to the Divertity of Genius. One is pleafed only with what strikes the Imagination (a), and only yields to fuch Proofs as are capable of agitating it. Every Ornament becomes suspicious to another; he will listen to nothing but dry Demonstration. Others agree at first to Ideas, that appear pompous to him; Subtilty is demonfirative to another; to perfuade a third, you need only make use of an even so, &c. he cannot refist a Comparison. Others will yield to one Example or two, that are easy and striking. A melancholy Man is prejudiced in favour of Solitude, and looks upon every thing to be dangerous, that would draw him from it. A Man of an harsh and sour Temper is prepoffessed in favour of all Maxims, that are painful and severe. The Humour of each Man is a Source of Prejudices to him: We ought to distrust all the Principles, and Conclusions, that are conformable to it.

WHEN Persons of a distinguished Character have Credit enough to make their Maxims esteemed, and have Authority, they form another kind of Prejudices called Idola Theatri; they have their Vogue for a Time, and they that shine upon the Theatre of the World make what pleases them respected by many, who place an equal Ho-

EVERY Family is a Theatre, where the Examples of Masters has the Place of Reason. If a beloved Mother L 4

(a) — Pro suspecto habendum quicquid Intellectum potissimum capit ac detinet. Nov. Grg. 53.

Adamant homines Scientias, aut quia auctores se earum cre-

dunt, aut iis maxime affueverunt. Ibid. 54.

Alia ingenia aptiora ad notandas rerum differentias, alia ad fimilitudines; utrumque labitur in excessium, prensando aut gradus rerum, aut umbras. 1bid. 55.

Alia antiquitatem, alia novitatem mirantur, pauca modum te-

nere possunt,

⁽b) Ex diversibus Dogmatibus Philosophiarum, ac legibus Demonstrationum sunt Idola Theatri, &c. Nov. Org. 44. & 62.

has a Foible for Predictions, this will be enough to difpose a grown Man, and one that is otherwise sensible and know-

ing, to give into Dreams, and other Prefages.

CHRISTIANITY is divided into Parties; in every one of them, it is a great Prejudice against a Maxim, or against the Explication of a Passage, if it pleases those, to whom a Man gives the Name of Adversaries, or if one effeemed by a different Party be the Author of it. Men teach Religion to Children, as they whiftle Tunes to a Parret, and many, that are got above their Childhood, inform themselves with no more Attention or Discernment than Children. There are reigning Maxims in every Party, whose Proofs and Solidity Men do not give themselves the Trouble to examine; on the contrary, they make a Merit of believing them without Hefitation (0).

THE Philosophy of Plato has reigned; that of Aristotle has taken its place, not without Struggle, and Tumult (d). The Pulpits have retained the Maxim, that every

(c) Idola Theatri multa funt, & plura erunt. Ibid. 62. Corruptio Philosophiæ ex Superstitione & Theologia commista, latius patet, & plurimum mali infert : præcipue in Pythagorà - & Platone - inter Græcos.

At present, when Men go all together, by Numbers, who are tied to certain Opinions, so far, that they are forced to defend what they do not approve; and when we receive the Arts by Civil Authority and Appointment, if so be the Schools have only a Patron, and a like Institution, and circumscribed Discipline; we do not look upon the Weight and Value of the Coin, but every Man in his turn takes it, according to the Price which common Approbation and Custom gives it. Men do not mind the Alloy, but the Custom. Thus all things are managed. Montagne, Book II. Chap. XII.

When my Inclination has placed me in one Party, the Obligation is not fo strong as to infect my Understanding. In the present Broils of this State, my Interest does not make me over-look, either the laudable Qualities of our Adversaries, or the Faults of my own Side. I do not only excuse the greatest Part of the Actions of my Friends. A good Work does not lofe its Graces, because it is written against me. Setting aside the Knot of the Dispute, I keep myself in Equanimity, and pure Indiffe-

Book III. Chap. X. rence.

Pendemus toti ex alienis judiciis, erc. Sen. de Otio Sap.

⁽d) Pugnax genus Philosophiæ & Sophisticum illaqueat intellectum; at illud alterum phantasticum, & tumidum, & quasi Poeticum, magis blanditur Intellectus ambitioni, &c. Bacon,

every thing tends to its Center; and feveral Comparisons. drawn from the four Elements, have been more than once the Matter of their Illustrations. The vegetative, fenfitive, and reasonable Soul, and many Trifles of that fort. have been alledged as Principles of common Sense. Ramus has fince that introduced his Jargon, and fince Persons of Authority have taken it into their Heads to follow it, eveby Discourse, formed upon the Series of his Places, had a Prejudice in its behalf on that account; and if it was out of that Method, it passed for dark and perplexed. According to the Reputation of the Master that falls to their Lot, Men extend or confine the Words they explain: One fubtilifes upon it, another will have only a profound Senfe, and much of the wonderful. This does nothing but accumulate several Passages; that is sensible of no Proofs that are not drawn from Greek Authors, Arabic Etymologies, and Allusions to antient Customs. Thus the Theatre gives a Change to Prejudices; but good Senfe, which is the furest Help, is feldom the most regarded (e.)

A DIVINE acquires a great Name, and then gives himself an Authority proportionable to his Reputation: Men learn his System by heart; his Definitions pass for so many Oracles. Here are the Principles of Religion. Well; from this they go to the Holy Scripture; they find some Places in it that are entirely conformable to the Doctor's Opinion, What do they do? Why, they find a Way to reduce the Scripture to his System by the Help of some Distinctions. His Name is instead of a Proof, and

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⁽e) The Opinions of Men are taken up in Consequence of old Persuasions, by Authority and upon Credit, as if that was Religion and Law. Men receive what is commonly held about them, like a Jargon; they embrace this Truth, with all its Sup-port, and Equipage of Arguments and Proofs, like a firm and folid Body, which they can shake, and judge of no more. On the contrary, all, in Emulation of one another, endeavour to patch up, and strengthen this received Belief with all their Reafon can bring; which is a Tool pliant, flexible, and capable of working upon any Figure. Thus the World is filled with, and depends upon Foolery and Lies. The Cause why Men do not doubt much of Things, is, that they do not bring common Impressions to the Trial; they do not found the Bottom of them, where the Fault and the Weakness lies; but only debate upon the Branches: they do not ask, whether this be true, but whe ther it has been thus or thus understood. Montagne, Book II. Chap. XII,

out of Zeal for the God of Mercy, they condemn without

Mercy all that think otherwise.

THE Spirit of Party is a Source of Prejudices, that blind Men so far, as to make them look upon a Habit, a Gefure, a Grimace, to be effential in the Matter of Religion. Carrying a Name, and taking a strong Fancy to a certain kind of Life, is enough to make several Men look upon that as sacred, and highly agreeable to God, which passes in the Eyes of the rest of Mankind, and with reason too, for indifferent.

When a Person, who makes a Figure on the Stage of the World, affirms, there is a Religion for Princes; another for Subjects; another for Ecclesiasticks; another for Soldiers; that Salvation is annexed to a certain Society, or Body Corporate; and that certain temporal Rights extend beyond Time itself, Men are always disposed so much to bend to the Authority of a celebrated Name, and so easily believe what it is their Interest should be true, that such Opinions, strange as they are, when proposed, meet with Followers. When we compare them with others, that are very much esteemed, we shall find very little Difference.

WHOLE Communities maintain with Heat certain Sentiments, that are univerfally condemned by others, where People dress something differently. Two Prejudices join Bigotry to the Community we are Members of,

and Aversion to others.

THE Word Idol perfectly fuits this Spirit of Party, which, by a kind of Enchantment, confounds the Mind, fo as to make it pay a Worship to Prejudices, and take all that supports them for undoubted Principles. The Example of Mr. Dodwell, otherwise a very learned and religious Man, shews us sufficiently, how far we ought to distide in this Spirit. He carried Episcopacy so high, as to believe, that the Son of God gave his Blood, and that this great Mystery, the Admiration of Heaven, was accomplished, to the end that they who had a little Water poured upon their Heads by Bishops, should acquire an immortal Soul; while that of others, tho' never so pious, was not different from that of Brutes. To support these Extravagances, he was obliged to betake himself to a thousand Principles, very favourable to Libertines. But what matters it; the Spirit of Party cleaves only to those within, and leaves in Peace those that are without, Thus this profound

profound and zealous Christian transforms Men into Beasts,

as Circe did formerly.

OPINIONS, established by Laws, Proofs authorized by Usage, the true, have their Force on most of those who receive them, from Prejudice. They can seldom alledge any Reasons, or they are so weak, that the least Objection destroys them. But what of that. Men believe, say they, because they will believe. This is the Character of a divine Faith; this is the Seal of Grace; and thus they sacrifice the Certainty of Faith, and the Honour of Religion in general, to a particular Hypothesis, for which they are prepossed.

PREJUDICE in favour of Opinions, on any Foundation, but that of Reason, is a real Slavery. It is a Chain we voluntarily submit to; for there is no greater Slavery, than to be tied to think just so as others will have us, and

have no Ideas but what they think proper.

BIGOTRY to a System is a Prejudice of that Nature, as ensnares a Man into numberless Errors. Provided what is advanced be agreeable to the System that is embraced, it is enough. All Reason that has this Character, is like a good Stamp upon Money, whose Weight is not considered. Some have imagined a System of Atoms, that formed the Universe by a fortuitous Concourse. An eternal Gravity made them descend in the infinite Abyss: But how could they join in this Motion of Descent, which was common to all? Why, part of them sell in oblique Lines, and so approached to them, whose Descent was perpendicular. It would have been more reasonable to say nothing, than to suppose thus without a Foundation. But Silence is no part of a System. This Supposition finds a Place there, among other Fictions.

WHAT Lucretius has faid concerning Spectres, is only a Tiffue of Words, that have no Signification; but the Prejudice of the System favours it: and if you consult him,

you will find how it passes among the rest (f).

This Reduction of Prejudices to four Classes is not barely ingenious; but it is, as you may see, solid, and founded upon Reason. Besides, it has its Use; and in proportion as we go on, and discover by Examination any Prejudices,

⁽f) Nunc age, quæ moveant animum res, accipe, & unde, &c.,
Lucret. IV. 726, &c. 780, &c. 798, &c.

Prejudices, it is proper to reduce them each to its Class, to reflect on the Dispositions by which we fall into them, and trace back the false Steps by which we came at them. By this we shall better remember what Deceit or Mistake was in the Maxim which seduced us, and be better able to unravel the Error that we meet with in those which resemble it.

V. I WILL add, that Prejudices, as well as Principles, either are limited to Specula-Practical Prejudices. tion, or extend to Practice. In Countries WILL where a Despotic Power prevails, it is a Prejudice that the most effential Duty, and the most perfect Glory confifts in obeying, without the least Hefitation, all the Caprice of a Man, whose Brain has been turned by Flatteries and Submiffions, even to Idolatry. It is a Prejudice among many Christians, that Injustice, Cruelty, and Murder, are indifferent Actions; nay, bright and honourble, when they go under the Name of War; whether the War be just or unjust, is not the Question. Another Prejudice, which is a Difgrace to Christianity, is, that a Man has no Honour, if he does not demand Satisfaction by the Sword, for fome Expression that piques him, or even a Grimace:

Some Atoms collect themselves, to make a Representation, infinitely small, of a Man; others, to make that of an Horse. Some make only a Representation of half a Man, while others meer to figure out half a Horse; and these two Moieties joined, strike the Soul with the Image of a Centaur.

All abounds with these Collections and Representations of Atoms; there are some that dance regularly, and imitate the Tunes

to which the Dance is composed.

We do not so easily perceive all the Spectres that hover incessantly in the Air; and if we sooner see those that relate to our Humour, or the daily Objects that employ us, it is because they are extremely small, and cannot therefore be observed, except by those who are extremely attentive to them. Now we are most attentive to Objects, for which we have a Relish, and we see better what we are in a Humour to see, because we give a closer Regard to it.

The Epicureans looked upon him as a God, who had the Courage to vent such of their Réveries, as he had neither an Idea of,

nor a Proof.

Oui Princeps vita rationem invenit, eam-

Lucret. Lib. V. ver. 8-50-63, 00.

Grimace; as if Honour depended on a brutal Imagination-There are some Countries, where a Man must be quarrelsome, to pass for a brave Man and a Gentleman: This is a Prejudice, in which Wolves, Bears, and Tygers would bring up their young ones, if they had Language. For nothing at all, a Man is ready to have his Throat cut: We have known this Folly prevail; it is a kind of Drunkenness; the Effusion of a little Blood will make Politeness succeed in the place of Frenzy; then a Man becomes a Friend, as if he had been only beaten in a Dream. Prejudice has annexed an Idea of Honour to these Levities.

It is likewise a Prejudice in Practice, very universal, that you ought in Complaisance to a Guest invited, to omit no Care towards the making of him intoxicated. Now if a Man would be content to put himself in a State of Beastiality before him, and be drunk by himself, he might say, that he had a mind for a Time to be a Brute, in order to make him absolute Master over him, and offer himself to him with all he has in his Power. But this is not the Case. To give him a Proof how much he honours and loves him, he attacks his Health and Reason at once, and sollicits him by his Example and Caresses to transform himself into a Beast for a Time. Yet this sort of People would pass for Men of the greatest Delicacy of Honour: But demand of them what that is, and you will find, they have no Idea of it.

ARE there not Multitudes, who think it a Blemish to their Descent, to make a Profession of Learning? But to sollow a Coach with Swords by their Sides, to take care of Dogs and Horses, to debauch in Liquor every Day, to make their Court to the most dissolute of Mankind; this derogates nothing from their Honour. But to apply the Light they have gained by Reading and Thinking, in order to free other Men from Ignorance, to educate Youth, to instruct the Adult, this is to forget they are Gentlemen! What can be more contemptible! When the School-Doctors define Man to be a reasonable Creature, do they consider well what they say, and how they deny that Name to a vast Number, if they give it to none that do not come up to that Definition.

VI. PREJUDICES in the Mind are like Stains, which cannot be ever entirely The Force of defaced. A fecret Reluctance to unfay Prejudices. what we have once faid, and the meer mechanical Force of Habits, makes us retain all we can of an

antient

antient Error. The old Philosophy disputes, as far as it can, the Ground with the new. We see a fanciful Mixture of Reason and of Pedantry reigning in the Schools. On one Side, Men allow themselves to think like the Moderns; on the other, they impose an Obligation to speak the antient Language, and dress themselves after the anrique Mode. The Jews and Pagans brought some of their Prejudices into the Christian Religion, even in the Apofile's Time; and among Thinking Men, till the Reformation, fome have thought they have feen more clearly, and have used what others have retained as a Prejudice. I have heard of a Few, who was made a fincere Convert to Christianity, and could not help a fecret Horror at the Sight of Swine's Flesh.

THE Mind of Man loves what is easy; this is one reafon that makes him fond of Order and Regularity, and suppose it even where it is not. Copernicus, who had the Courage to raise himself above universal Prejudices, about the Rest of the Earth in the Centre of the World, still preserves that of the perfectly circular Motions of the Stars. At last Men are come off that Prejudice; but they have made several Efforts, and perhaps all useless, to de-

termine their Courses on regular Curves.



den in the core CHAP. VII.

Of the principal Causes of our False Judgments.

Precipitancy the general Cause of Errors.



E are never mistaken when we attribute no more to a Subject W than what we fee in it; or, (which amounts to the same) when we perceive that what we affirm, is contained in the Idea

We

we affirm it of: For even in Negative Propositions, the Exclusion of the Attribute is affirmed of the Subject, of which you deny that Attribute. Since therefore our Judgments are but too often erroneous, we must conclude, that we often affirm and deny without a due Sight of Things.

We suppose and determine before we perceive; we are therefore too hasty in giving our Assent; and it may be faid, that all our Mistakes come from this Precipitancy. When we fee, and make ourselves attentive to what we see. we cannot help owning it, or giving our Affent to it. All we can do to elude the Force of Evidence, which, without staying for the Confent of our Liberty, masters our Affent, is, to turn our Attention from it. But they, who thus escape it are faulty, and abuse their Liberty. On the contrary, they who follow it are praise-worthy, and make a good Use of their Liberty; not by affenting, when they might avoid it, for we must not agree to a Thing, till Evidence forces us; but by applying their Attention to it, when they might have turned it another way. He who judges wifely, gives up himfelt to a victorious Evidence; but he who is mistaken, gives himself up voluntarily to a Supposition, even while he is still Master of his Assent; and therefore he does it too foon. Let us inquire into the Caufe of this Precipitancy, in order to avoid them.

What strikes lively on the Imagnation, has the place of Evidence. We yield to it, and cannot refist a strong Impression. A Man says he is a Prophet, and he assirms it boldly, he foretells with a terrible Accent, and the most vehement Expressions, the Judgments of God. Men believe him upon his Word; and when the Imagination thus overcome has once subdued the Reason, they never quit their Error; they adhere stubbornly to it, in spight of their Senses. John of Leyden presented himself to the People, who were tired with ill Government and Tyranny in Religion, as a Resormer. He afterwards established Polygamy, governed at his own pleasure, punished, sentenced to Death, and executed his own Awards himself. No matter; he is still respected as a Resormer, and a Deliverer; those great Ideas had seized upon the Imagination,

it did not get clear of them.

II. WHATEVER determines our Choice on one Side more than another, is a Cause Particular of our Precipitancy. The Constitution, Habits, Passions, produce that Effect. We have,

in the First Part of this Work, treated of the Illusions into which we are cast by these Principles: we will not repeat what we said there about them. The first Operation of the Mind, regulated as it ought to be, puts us in a Posture to conduct the second rightly.

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WHEN I say, that the Constitution, the Passions, the Habits, determine our Judgments, it must not be thought. that I make a Man say, I am naturally peevish, here is a Proposition that fits me, for it is something harsh in it; or, I have used to manage myself in a certain manner, here is a Maxim that suits my Practice; or, I find that I hate, and what is faid gives Authority to my Pique, therefore I must approve it: No Person is so foolish, or such an Enemy to Truth, as to reason thus. The Meaning of it is this; we are determined fometimes by Ideas, and at other times by Sensations. When a Man finds himself scorching by too near an Approach to the Fire, he immediately retires from it. Sensation itself occasions his Retreat, without the Interpofal of Reason. An hungry Man, that meets with Food to his Relish, satisfies himself without reasoning. And thus we follow our Inclinations, and are immediately determined by the Sensations which go along with them; we are determined to agree to what is conformable to them, without the Intervention of Reasoning.

An Idea pleases us, and on that very account that it pleases, we yield to it. For Instance, we suppose, that we are really what we ought to be: Why so Because the Supposition pleases. This is a great Bar to our Improvement; for we do not labour to be what we fancy we are

already (b).

WE refign ourselves to what is pleasing; we promise ourselves the Attainment of Old Age; yet it is very rare to arrive at it. The less probable appears the most so, and we reckon most upon it. Whence is this? It gives us Pleasure (i).

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⁽b) Multos puto ad fapientiam potuisse pervenire, nisi putassent se pervenisse. Sen.

⁽i) Senes decrepiti paucorum annorum accessionem votis mendicant: minores natu seipsos esse singunt; mendacio sibi blandiuntur, &c. Sen. de Brev. Vita. Cap. XI.

The Preachers know, that the Emotion which comes upon them in speaking, animates them towards Belief; and that in our Warmth, we are more earnest in the Desence of our Proposition, we imprint it upon ourselves the more, and embrace it with more Vehemence and Approbation, than when we are cold and at ease. You barely recite your Cause to a Pleader, he answers doubtfully, and with Indifference to either Side. Have you paid him well to stick to it, and set it in Form? Does he begin to be concerned?

SENSATIONS have commonly more Power over us than Ideas. A Sensation easily detaces an Idea; but an Idea seldom holds up against a Sensation: for that the Will must assist it, and there must be some Effort of Attention: And in this partly consists the Force of the Mind. Ideas teach us, what we ought to do and believe; Sensations oppose our Light, and often enshare us (k) to the contrary of what we ought to do. On these Occasions, to prefer the feebler to the stronger Impressions, is the Business of Liberty, that takes the part of Reason, and it is by this that a Man is wife.

To wean ourselves from these Opinions, into which the consused Principles of Sensation bring us, we need only try them by Reasoning. Then the Ridicule of them will appear. He rides in his Coach, therefore he is a wiser and better Man than if he went on foot. His Coach is drawn by six Horses, therefore he has more Sense and

Judgment, than if it was drawn by two.

WE often reason in the Manner that is rallied by Cicero, or the Author of the Books addressed to Herennius.

Amicum castigare ob meritam noxiam, &c.

It is proper to chastise a Friend; for this Day I will cha-

stife mine according to his Defert.

III. THERE is a Cause of Precipitancy and Doubt that has pretty much, like others, its Source in the Inclinations of the Heart, Stoth and Vabut it deserves the more to be considered, because more frequent, and consequently less

observed. We avoid Pain as much as we can; Examina-

concerned? Is his Inclination warm upon it? His Reason and Knowledge apply to it in Proportion; now it is a clear and undoubted Truth, that presents itself to his Understanding. He sees it in another, believes it in good earnest, and thus persuades himself of it. Montagne, Book II. Chap. XII.

(k) If we give to Appearances the French Name of Visions, and the Latin, Visa, to resist Appearances, especially when they flatter us, and be willing to take the Trouble of passing on to a Certainty, this is obsistere visis, the great Praise of the wise Man.

Ego maximam actionem puto, repugnere visis, obsistere opinionibus, & assensus lubricos sustinere. Cic. Acad. Quast. Lib. IV.

(1) We are not inclined to condemn ourselves, we love to think that we are in the right; and therefore approve what we do, without Examination whether it be reasonable or not.

tion is painful, and tirefome. We do not carry on the Toil, because it fatigues us; and we flatter ourselves we have gained our Point, because it is mortifying to think we have laboured in vain. By the Influence of these Dispositions, it happens, that after having refused to admit a Thing, as really not clear nor just; yet being tired with that Inquiry, we yield at length to the last Reflexion, which is often no better than the preceding, and fometimes is inferior to them; because it does not come into the Mind, till it is more exhausted than it was at the Beginning. It is not Boys only that incur this Fault, in the Composition of their Themes; but Men of a more advanced Age, in their Composures. When they are tired with Erasements, they look for the last Thought, in a Resolution to keep to it; and when it comes, they write it down without any more Formality. This Habit is confirmed from Day to Day by repeated Actions, and eafily prevails in the Years of Manhood, because they are taken off from the Leisure of confidering duly, by frequent Affairs, and Employments, more than in Youth.

IV. To avoid these inconveniences, you must strictly guard against making a Composition on Subjects that have not been very familiar, and known exactly, by a gradual Method from the first and most simple to the most compounded Ideas and Principles. You must undertake nothing without consulting your Strength, and calculating the Work, with the Time that is proper for it (m). You must labour by Steps, not determine yourself, or fix on a Thought in the Moment it arises, and while the Pleasure of bringing it to Light creates a Prejudice in its Favour; but we must let fall that Prejudice, and cool the Fire that gave Birth to it, before we examined it (n).

As to the Inconveniences that arife from other Inclinations, I will add only this to what I have observed in the First Part of this Work, that every considerate Man may perceive his Inclinations, Passions, and Biass of Constitu-

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⁽m) Quoties aliquid conaberis, te simul & ea, quæ paras, quibusque pararis, ipse metire.— Hoc interest, utrum quis servidi sit ingenii, an frigidi, atque humilis. Sen. de Irâ, Lib. III. Cap. VII.

⁽n) Quicquid voles quale sit scire, tempori trade, nihil diligenter in fluctu cernitur. Sen.

tion and Habit. If then he is afraid of a Mistake, and is a Lover of Truth, he will distrust all the Conclusions that are conformable to these suspicious Principles; and the more agreeable they are to them, the more he redoubles his Attention to examine them. He will with a scrupulous Care follow an orderly Method in his Ways of Thinking, and will not affent, till forced by Evidence. This is the only Motive by which he is allowed to determine himfelf.

He must always see before he decides.

ACCORDING to this Rule, we ought to distrust the most all Opinions, in which we have been educated: All that we have an Interest to believe, and that leads us to maintain it: All that comes from Persons to whom we are obliged, or from whom we have Hopes, or whom we defire to please, ought to be weighed in the most even Balance. We often think we yield to Evidence, when we only fubmir to Authority, or to some other Allurements. A moderate Capacity, joined with Greatness, does always dazzle in either Sex. Men eafily comply, when they ho-

nour themselves in serving their Masters.

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WHEN in examining any controverted Point, we fear our Opinion should prove false, we are no real Friends to Truth, to which we are so loth to facrifice our private Sentiments. But some will say, is it wrong for a Man that inquires into the Being of a God, his Providence, or the Immortality of the Soul, to wish to be convinced of them? Ought he at first to look upon these Questions with the same Indifference as he does on the Hypothesis of Natural Philosophy, the Divisibility of Matter, the Motion of the Earth, &c. And must be view them with the same Unconcernedness as if he was making a Purchase, buying a Place, putting out his Money at Interest, or the like? I. answer, That the more we are (0) concerned in any Question, the more it deserves to be cleared by demonstrative Proofs: and therefore we must be scrupulously exact in finding folid Proofs in proportion to the Importance of the Point in question.

A HEART not defirous of being fully fatisfied in the Existence of a Go p and Providence, or is unconcerned in any thing that relates thereto, is certainly not qualified for VOL. II.

⁽⁰⁾ We must distrust the truth of an Experiment, in which we lee, what we were delirous of seeing. Hift, de l'Acad. der Scien. Anno 1709. p. 52.

finding the Truth; and he that is already disposed (by a laudable Desire of establishing these Truths) to embrace the first Proof that offers, and for sear of meeting with a Flaw in it, only examines it superficially, and without the Circumspection which the Love of Truth requires, does Injustice to that Truth which he is endeavouring to establish: for this should be his only care, to distinguish Truth from Falshood.

A Man cannot reflect too much on what he sees, to get the better of his Passions, and free himself, by that Distrust, from the Illusions to which they expose him. Gerbert was Successor to Arnoul (whose Deposition the Pope did not approve) in the See of Rheims. He wrote so warmly against the Pope's Authority, that he lost his Bishoprick. Otho III. to whom he fled for Refuge, made him Archbishop of Ravenna. After this, he was raised to the Pontificate, and then changed his Style, and maintained the Papal Authority as vigorously, as he before opposed it. We take things in several Meanings, and are either for or against them, as Interest directs our Views.

V. Some indeed are resolved to admit of Suspension. no Evidence, that leaves room for doubting; but, thro' a fickle Humour, and Spirit of Contradiction, not considering the Proofs offered in all their Circumstances, always remain in Suspense. Therefore, to this good Resolution of not yielding to any thing but Evidence, a Man must join a fincere and ardent Application to search and examine. Nothing should delay or rebate the Endeavours he ought to use, towards a Discovery of the Truth.

In the Point of Suspension, as in many other Cases, Men are carried to the opposite Extreme; to some Men it is insupportable (p). This last State is the most natural; for that of Suspension is an imperfect State, in which we perceive our Ignorance, Darkness; our Distance from the End

⁽p) What sits the most uneasy upon me is, to be in Suspense about things that press upon me, and to sluctuate between Hope and Fear. The Act of Deliberation, tho' upon the slightest Matters, disturbs me; and I feel my Mind less able to bear the Shocks of Doubt and Consultation, than to give up itself to any Side, after the Die is thrown. Few Passions have ever broke my Repose, but the least Deliberation in the World disquiets me Montagne, Book II. Chap. XVII.

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End we aspire to, (that is, the Knowledge of things, to which the Mind naturally tends) and the Difficulty of attaining it. Being therefore sensible of this Load of Incumbrances, that goes along with Suspension, we defire to get rid of it, and of the Uncasiness of Mind attending Suspension, which is another Argument of our want of Knowledge, we give up ourselves to the first Amusement that offers: so, to be clear of Suspension, we resign ourselves to the first Notions that occur.

We may apply to Uncertainty in general, what Senecal says in particular of fluctuating between Hope and Fear: Nihil eque amarum quam diù pendere. Æquiore quidam animo ferunt præcidi spem, quam trahi. De Benef. Lib. II. cap. 5. Nothing is more insupportable than to be long in suspence; and there are many had rather be refused at first, than receive what they desire, after a long Expectation. So, many had rather give up all as uncertain, than cautiously and by degrees arrive to the clearest Evidence.

SINCE therefore we are disposed by Nature to be always uneafy in a State of Suspension, we seek Reliet in a speedy Decision. Now as long as we are in this dogmatical Temper, we are out of the Road of Truth; for we don't then examine, but decide; we guess and conclude at once, no Confideration intervening: Hence arise many Errors both in Theory and Practice; so many Words and Periods, that fignify nothing; fo great a Diversity of Opinions, and Obstinacy in supporting them. But on the other fide, the Forwardness of Men in speaking upon all Subjects, the Vanity of paffing for Men of deep and univerfal Learning, and at the same time the Incapacity they are in to know every thing; their Aversion to Fatigue, especially the Trouble of resting long on the same Subject, and viewing it in different Lights, severely examining their own Thoughts, correcting, retrenching, and tracing them over again, all this inclines many to be content with a superficial Knowledge, that yet passes for found Learning with the Generality of Men. Therefore they are only accultomed to glance on the Surface of Things, but apprehending they cannot, with a superficial Knowledge, maintain all they advance; and fearing Contradictions in what they maintain, they will believe nothing, but take refuge in Scepticism. If this be at first a little mortifying, Custom reconciles it to them, and confirms them in it fo far, that they never leave it. On one hand, the Mind of Man is carried to judge of every thing by Vanity and Indolence; M 3

dolence; on the other, he cannot use all the necessary Application for judging well: his Sloth and Vanity find their Account equally, so that he cannot attain higher than to a

meer Probability.

LAZINESS, and Vanity, the Love of Ease, and that of Distinction, govern the Heart by Turns, and are a Check on each other. Without Vanity, Sloth would throw us into a State of Inactivity; and without the Love of Ease, Vanity would engage us in endless Enterprizes, in

fpite of all Dangers and Opposition.

WHEN these two general Principles concur to produce an ill Effect, the Evil is almost without Remedy. A Man that always decides upon what offers, because 'tis as eafy to be positive as 'tis very painful to find out the Reafons of Things, and confider them impartially, if at the fame time he takes pleasure in thinking that he sees with the Turn of an Eye what others are affured of, but by frequent Reviews, he will be positive in his Decisions, on the same Principles that made him at first ready to decide. It would be exceeding troublesome for a sothful Man to re-examine: and to a vain Person it would be too mortifying to own, he has been mistaken.

Thus the one, instead of waiting for the force of Evidence to clear his Doubts, quits them voluntarily. The other, instead of looking for Evidence to end his Suspenfion, is pleased with, and willingly rests in it. Each of them determines himself to the most agreeable Side, according to his Humour. But a Lover of Truth avoids equally both Extremes. He does not love Suspension for itself, nor hate it: but uses it as a Retreat from Error, and that Precipitancy that is the Cause of it, till the Evidence he continually purfues, makes him relinquish it in

Safety.

A M A w that loves to domineer in the Commonwealth of Letters, and has gained some Credit, is not less displeased at those who suspend their Judgments on what he pronounces, for fear of being mistaken, than with those whose Opinions are quite opposite to his, nay, the former often appear the more odious; for he looks upon their Modesty as a tacit Condemnation of his Rashness in deciding upon what he does not understand. Indeed they give him the greater Uneasiness. When a Matter is above our Capacity, it is as easy to defend as oppose it; and the Reasons of him who denies, are not commonly clearer than those of the affirmative. So that they are reciprocally obliged alolotice;

obliged to pardon the Obscurity of one another. But what can we say to those that ask for clear and positive Proofs, when we have them not? What a Mortification is it, to be forced to allow more Wisdom in the Ignorance of ano-

ther, than in his own Learning?

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WHEN we see Men, whether in familiar Conversations, or in graver and more folemn Affemblies, supporting all they fay by Proofs which they imagine demonstrative, oppose their Adversaries by Reasons they think unanswerable; when we view their attentive, confiderate, and inquifitive Air, one would imagine their Love of Truth, and Fear of Miltake, or of milleading others, furpafied all other Confiderations; yet 'tis not fo: for if we furvey the Practice of the World, we shall find little elfe but Grimace among the Generality of Mankind. True, they are attentive to what you propose, but it is only to see whether it be agreeable or no to their Interests; and accordingly they approve or condemn it. Then they look for Reasons to justify their Taste to themselves and others, and find them of Weight in proportion as they fall in with it; they do not perplex themselves to weigh those Reasons in an even Balance, but study how to make them as plaufible in the Opinion of others as they are agreeable to themfelves. Sometimes too great a Vivacity hinders them from feeing that you make them a Proposal which will turn to their account. Their first Motion will be to reject it. This is insupportable, fay they, it has not the least Shadow of Reason. But get one Moment's Patience of them; let them know, that you speak for them. Oh! I did not understand you, they will fay: I agree it is very right. And yet the Proposition is still the same, but in proportion as it concerns them, or as they think it does, it is reasonable, or abfurd. Sometimes we may reject a Proposition, as appearing contrary to some Interests, which is blended with our own; but when we can separate these, and oppose one without prejudicing the other, the Absurdity will foon Not only Idiots and the meanest Capacities are thus mistaken, but those whose Knowledge ought to be clearer, are not exempt from these Illusions; and when we surprise them in these mean Shifts, instead of blushing, they assume an Air of Gravity, flattering themselves that this, and a fleady Adherence to what they have faid, will cover them from all Reproach. When you know a Person's Humour, his Acquaintance, and Manner of living, as he is rough or complaifant, liberal or covetous, gay or melan-M 4

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melancholy, easy or restless, satisfied or peevish, sierce or timorous; as he is a Friend or Relation to this or that Man, as those with whom he loves to amuse himself at Play, over a Glass, or in an Intrigue; in short, according to the Interest that his Rivals or Flatterers will take in an Affair, you may certainly presage, on what side Justice and

Reason will appear to him.

In the whole Course of Life, we ought to make it a very great Scruple to decide on any thing further than it appears clear to us. We ought to reproach ourselves inwardly, when we judge by other Motives. Without these Precautions, the Habit of determining by Interest will not fail to be established; and when it is, the most important Concerns of those who conside in us, the Interests of the Public and of Religion itself will be basely given up to our mean private Interests, without knowing we make such a Sacrifice.



CHAP. VIII.

Of singular, universal, and particular Propositions.

fignified thereby, distinguish them into true and false: That Relation which they bear to our Understanding, divides them into certain and probable: And that which the Subject has to its Attribute, whereby its Idea

is implied or excluded, into affirmative or negative Propofitions. We must now pass to some other Distinctions between the Subject and the Attribute, considered in themfelves.

of singular propositions.

I. I with the Term which expresses the Subject of a Proposition, is applicable only to one Thing, it is called fingular and individual, and its Object a singular Being, or an Individuam.

SOMETIMES the Subject of a Proposition, however rague or undetermined itself, is yet determined by the Circum-

Circumstances to one fingle Subject; as when I fay, this here; that there; as by shewing a Man with the Finger.

THAT a Thing be called individual, it is not necessary that it be an indivisible Point. A Collection of several Parts makes up one Individual, when it makes one Whole: Thus the Bod of a Man is not many Bodies of Men, but one single Body of a Man; and in this Sense the Names of a College, a Community, a People, a Nation, a Body of Nations, united under one Sovereign, or in one Confederacy, are singular and individual, since they are applied each to its Subject, in its Totality; and this we have made appear in the First Part, Sect. II. Chap. V.

NAMES which are applicable to more than one Object, are taken either in their whole Extent, or in a Part of it. The first form universal Propositions, the second

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It is visible by this, that fingular Propositions have a Relation to the universal, which they have not to the particular: for, fince the Subject of a fingular Proposition does not extend beyond one thing, it is evident, that it is there in all its Force, as well as in universal Propositions, and not in a Part only of its Extent, as in the particular ones.

II. WERE Men always to express themfelves exactly, we might here conclude this Chapter, and these few Remarks would suffice: but sometimes universal Expressions are Exaggerations, which, the autho-

How we diftinguish the universal from the particular.

ons are Exaggerations, which, tho' authorised by Custom, must be understood with Restriction, and be looked upon only as particular Propositions. Sometimes, on the other hand, we speak modestly, and in a limited Sense, and yet it ought to be understood universally. In short, there are Propositions without any express Mark of Singularity, Particularity, or Universality. Rules are required to serve as a Guide in these Obscurities.

We examine a Proposition, either to form a just Idea of the Opinion and Views of him who advanced it, or to discover whether he advanced an Error, or a Truth. The second of these Inquiries regards Right, or what we ought to believe; the first Fast, or what the Opinion of a Man is. When we examine a Proposition, to clear up the Truth of it, we should form exact Ideas of the Subject, and Attribute, and compare them together. If in this Comparison we discover, that the Idea of the Attribute is contained in all that bears the Name of the Subject, the

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Proposition will be owned to be universally true: but if the Attribute agrees to some Subjects, and not to others, it will be particular; so that to know the Universality of a Proposition, we must know the Things upon which it turns.

YET we have no right to fay, that a Man is mistaken who advances a Proposition, every time he expresses himself in general Terms, without the Attribute of his Propofition agrees unexceptionably to all that carries the Name of the Subject. For when we go upon Fact, to fettle what is the Sentiment of a Man, provided he speaks in the usual manner, it would be unjust to strain his Expressions too far, and attribute more Force to them than Custom has given them. Now it is usual to speak of what we see frequently, as we do of what happens every day. Men abound in these Propositions, and their Language is so imperfect, that it must be the height of Malice to take Advantage of these Irregularities of Speech with defign of imputing to those who fpeak or write according to established Custom, such Excesses as they utterly abhor. Sometimes again it happens, that an unreasonable Principle has given room to fome Expressions, which it will not be amiss to follow, because they are authorised by Custom. For Instance, it was a ridiculous, as well as an excessive Vanity, for the Roman People to take pleafure in calling themselves Masters of the World, making the Roman Empire, All the Earth, Orbis Terrarum, and ousselven, to be Terms synonymous. S. Luke employed the last of these Words in the usual Sense, when he faid, that the Emperor ordained by an Edict, that the whole World should be taxed (or enrolled).

Three forts of guish three forts of Universality. I. An Universality. exact Universality, that suffers no Restricti-

on; as when we fay, that every equal Number is divided into two equal Parts; that whatever acts, exists. And we call, in the Schools, this Universality Mathematical, or Metaphysical, because Propositions in these Sciences, having such Matters for their Object as are necessary and invariable, for that reason admit of no Exception. 2. The Laws of Nature, in consequence of which Men walk upon two Legs, Birds sly, Metals are weighty, these Laws take place always, if you except some rare Cases, where Nature seems to forget herself, and go out of her Road; and as these Cases are very rare, we do not give much regard to them, and we pronounce in

in general, that Birds fly, that Men have two Feet, Ec. And this Universality is called Physical. 3. There is another that is still less necessary, founded on Principles more fubject to change: Such is the Universality of Propositions that declare, how far the Affections of Men are ordinarily carried. Thus we fay, that Mothers extend their Fondness to their Children too far; that young People are light and inconstant, and love to ramble, and are fond of Amusements; that a Nation is fierce, laborious, ingenious, flupid, &c. This Universality is called Moral: perhaps it was called fo by pure Hazard. The first was called Metaphysical, the second Physical, on the account of the Objects which most of the Propositions so called treated of. After them, Morality gave Name to the third kind. The Schools were full of fuch unreasonable Distinctions; their Heads were always employed on these three Names, from the three Parts of Philosophy they taught, and when they had borrowed one, the rest must follow. A Physical Cause. A Moral Cause. A Physical Necessity. A Moral Necessity. The Rules of Morality are established upon simple and certain Principles, and we can demonstrate its Conclusions with an equal Force and Extent to those of Metaphyficks.

YET as we regulate our Conduct upon Circumstances, and fince there are Occasions when we must determine ourselves, without a sure and incontestable Light upon those Circumstances, we often in Life are reduced to take the probable for the certain, and what is frequent for what happens daily. This gives some Foundation to the Name

of Moral Universality.

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It is essential to a good Book to be censured, and the greatest Disgrace that can happen to a Work published, is, not that it is disparaged by many, but that it is neglected by all. This is a Proposition of Moral Universality, expressed in Terms that appear to me to be something strong. We regard the good Opinion of the Public, as something belonging to the Essence of a Book. A Book may be good, and contain nothing opposite to the received Sentiments: and such a Book will not be censured. The Name likewise of an Author, little known, may be a Guard against Criticism. Learned Men are indolent about those who give them no Umbrage, and with whom they have nothing to do: and we often praise a Work, which we should tear in pieces, were it written by one of the same College.

IV. WHEN

IV. WHEN we advance a Proposition without any Mark of Universality, or Particularity, and laying aside the Terms All, Always, Every, a Part, for Example, we

fay in general, Circles are divided into two equal Parts by the Diameter: Courtiers do what they can to embarrass their Masters: When a Man goes to assure me of the Universality of the Truth of these Propositions, I examine the Ideas of the Things they contain: When he goes only to discover the Intention of him who advanced them, it he be present, I ask him; if I can only consult what he has written, I view what goes before and follows that Passage that perplexes me, in order to understand or find a Key to the Expressions. In short, by the Knowledge I have of the Truth of what he affirms or denies, I avoid the giving his Words a Sense that is grossly erroneous; for we cannot presume that an Author should be so palpably mistaken.

V. THERE are Propositions that are universally extended to all the Individuals:

Restrictions in There are some whose Universality does not reach beyond the Genus. All Men are mortal: This is true of all the Individuals.

All terrestrial Animals were saved from the Deluge in the Ark. This is true of all the Kinds. Sometimes again a Proposition is universally true, if you do not extend it beyond the Individuals of a certain Sort or Quality. All Men are saved by Jesus Christ, that is, all those that are saved: By which again we see the Necessity of knowing the Things meant by a Proposition, in order to form a just Idea of the Truth of it.

THERE are likewise Propositions, whose Universality, purely moral, and already confined by Exceptions, is only true with respect to certain Times and Places. When Horace says,

Atas Parentum, pejor Avis, tulit Nos requieres, mox daturos Progeniem vitiosiorem.

Lib. III. Ode VI. 44.

Our Fathers were unequal in Goodness to our Grandfathers, and our Posterity will still be more vicious than we. He saw the Train of Things: He had reason to speak thus, and Experience justified his Prediction. But it would be ridiculous to look upon this as an universal Maxim, applicable

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Prince, that enjoys a long Reign, must produce very happy Improvements in his State; and if his Successors follow his Steps, Probity will manifestly increase from Reign to Reign, and from Generation to Generation.

VI. We are in love with general Propofitions; for we find they procure a greater Extent of Knowledge than the particular; and this is the Cause we so easily yield to them, especially if the Turn of Expression be something sprightly (9). For we are

Of the Fondness we have for universal Determinations.

likewise pleased with any thing that's Wit; but these general and bright Maxims often contain a very false Sense.

(r) He that gives, ought immediately to forget it; and he that receives, ought always to remember it.

THEREFORE we ought to be ever doing Good, without Distinction, to the Ungrateful as well as to Perfons of Merit.

But in general, there is nothing at which Men are less skilful, than in keeping themselves within just Bounds. Some prescribe a Law to themselves of approving every thing; others place a Glory in criticising upon all Subjects. Some know all, and see more than there is; others will

not even agree to what they perceive.

UNIVERSAL Propositions equally favour the Supineness and the Vanity of Man. The former gives him an
Aversion to a particular Inquiry, and he grows weary of
studying the Subjects that have a Resemblance one to another. Out of Vanity, he loves to persuade himself, that
in making a few Paces, he advances much: and when he
acquiesces in an universal Proposition, he applauds himself for the Extent of his Knowledge. These general Propositions thus meeting the Principles that make them amiable, and recommend them to our Entertainment, it is
not surprising, if we too easily acquire a Habit of forming
them. At first, Men only use their Senses, and their earliest Conclusions are only drawn from Experience. A hundred or two hundred Stones, each of which appears to be
heave.

(r) Alter statim oblivisci debet dati, alter accepti nunquam.

Sen. de Ben. Lib. Ll. Cap. X.

⁽q) Ornatissime sunt igitur orationes ea, que letissime vagantur, & à privata ac singulari controversia se ad universi generis vim explicandam conferunt, &c. Cic. de Orat. Lib. III.

that every Stone is heavy. Men have reasoned thus on several Subjects; and finding nothing that obliges them to retract, they are accustomed to build general Maxims on a small number of Facts, and having practised this Method on a great number of Subjects, it becomes a Law.

UniversalConclusions are often deceitful. VII. But notwithstanding all the Experience we amass together, the Conclusion we draw from it can never rise to an Universality, on which we may entirely repose ourselves, unless we join some Reasonings

to it, formed upon Notions that are truly universal. Something may ever escape our Experience, and we are not assured that no Case can present itself, which has no Resemblance to any of those we have already seen, till the Nature of Things has convinced us by a strict Knowledge, and just Ideas of them, that they should always go, as we find, by some Cases of Experiences, they have gone.

WHEN I affure myself, that no Effect can arise, but by virtue of some Change, and that it is impossible any Change should happen without Motion, I rely sufficiently on the Ideas I have of Effect, Change, and Motion, to persuade myself that this Proposition is without Contradiction universal, and to conclude, that it is from Motion,

even there, where I can fee none.

Or a thousand Persons, who have made some Progress in the Study of Mechanics, even more than superficial, you will hardly find two or three who do not receive this Rule as general, without Exception. In Levers, the Distances from a fixed Point augment the Powers: But they who have once known, that Distance does not increase the Power, but because it increases the Velocities of the Thing moved, will also know, that in Cases where Distance will not produce this last Effect, it will not be the Cause of the other, which it does not produce, but in virtue of the former; and this is what happens in certain compounded Pendulums.

EXPERIENCE shews us, that we cannot be too circumspect in Matters of Fact, and in Physical Phænomena, nor too backward of advancing general Propositions. (5) It has been believed, that corrosive Sublimate Arsenic, if sophisticated, would blacken, mixed with Oil of Tartar; and

⁽s) See the Hift. of the Acad. of Sciences, Anno 1699. p. 46. and Anno 1709. Anal. des Clop.

and that, if good, it would only redden: The Experiment is found to be false; there is a Sublimate that never blackens.

I r has been concluded, on a great Number of Experiments, that the Mixture of acid Salts with Alkah's was the only Cause of Fermentations: But this Principle once supposed, Men have perplexed themselves very much to

find Alkali's, where there were none.

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PERSONS of mean Capacities cannot examine Things in all their particular Circumstances, for that requires Depth of Understanding, great Study and Application; but content themselves with universal Propositions, which conceal their Ignorance from themselves, and spare them the Pains they know is superior to their Strength: They think likewise they hide their Ignorance by babbling, rather than a modest Silence. It is their Character to exaggerate, and a decisive Tone is the Consequence of the same Principles. This is likewise a Source of Pyrrhonism; as, I am mistaken, therefore I am always mistaken, and no Person is assured of being successful in his Reasonings.

Our of Laziness, Vanity, or Impatience, we suffer ourselves to go into universal Propositions; we affirm, we deny, without Exception. After this, we meet with Cases, which we cannot reconcile with what we looked upon to be generally true; and then, by an Effect of the same Principles, the same Laziness, Vanity, and Impatience, we universally reject that, which we had admitted in the same Extent, or else sall into Irresolution, Doubt, and Pyrrhonism; and from that, give up ourselves to the most ridiculous Fancies. Montagne has given us Instances every Moment. Would you have a Man

found, well-regulated, and in a firm and fure Book II. Chap. Posture, mussle him up in Darkness, Indo. XII.

lence, and Stupidity: We must be Brutes

before we can be wise, and blind before we can be guided.

But is it not better to continue in a State of Suspension, than to entangle myself in Errors inextricable, the Effects of Application and Study?

Take the surest Side you can, you will be obliged to attack an hundred contrary Opinions, before you can establish your own. If you affirm, they deny; and the Reasons on

both Sides seem to be equally probable.

If the Understanding be entirely extinguished by an Apoplexy, we cannot doubt but a Cold impairs it: And by Consequence, we can hardly find an Hour in Life, when our Tudgment

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Judgment is serene and clear; our Bodies being subject to so many continual Changes, and moving by so great a Variety of Springs, that I believe what the Physicians affirm, bow hard it is to preserve it from being constantly drawn

avery by some of them.

The vare foolish, who think of putting a Check to our Disputes, by reducing them to the express Word of God; so long as our Minds do not enter a less spacious Field, when they would controul the Sense of another, than when they would represent their own. Our Actions, which are in a perpetual Change, have little relation to Laws that are fixed and unmoveable. What are the more desirable, are the more rare, simple and general. And I still think, we had better have none at all, than have them in so great a Number.

No two Men ever judged alike of the same Thing; and it is impossible to see two Opinions exactly alike, not only in different Men, but in the same Men, at different Hours. Commonly I find a Doubt, where a Commentary has not wouch safed to touch upon it. I fall the most readily in a plain Field, as some Horses, that I know, stumble the most frequently in an even Way. Who can say, but Things encrease our Doubts and Ignorance? Since we see no Book, either Humane or Divine, which the World is the most attentive to, where the Interpretation puts an End to the Difficulty.

MAXIMS and Characters have for fome Time been Works the most in Fashion, and we cannot wonder at it: For, if you reckon only the first of the Kind, they have an original Turn, so efficacious to please, that the Mind has every Thing in it, that is agreeable to its most reigning Inclinations. There is the Shining that strikes you, and the Various that relishes, and keeps you in Breath. Matters that lie within the Apprehensions of all the World are presented in an uncommon Form. When we read them, we find, that it is more than an Amusement; and that we are employed on Subjects of Importance to be known, the Heart of Man, its Virtues and Vices. We enjoy the malicious Pleasure of seeing all the Ridiculousness of others; and if we find our own Foibles painted too, they are fo well blended with those of the wifest and most virtuous Men, that we are not ashamed, or inwardly reproached for them. By this Means fuch Books may have an ill Effect, and undoubtedly have. We think we are not obliged to be truly wife, when we are perfuaded, that the wife Man is a Chimera; that they, who pass for the Wifest, are only superior to Fools and Knaves in the Outfide;

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fide; that all is Appearance and Grimace; and that the least Deceivers of Mankind are they, who, without having any View of imposing upon others, impose very honestly upon themselves, and believe themselves to be what they are not; that is, that the least Deceivers are the most stupid and foolish. The Venom of this Way of Writing cannot be detected by faying, they talk only of human Virtues; and that in putting afide all that a Man believ'd he possessed of Goodness, they make him more sensible of the Necessity of Grace, and the Excellence of the Christian Virtues, which that inspires. The Tendency of this pompous Distinction is very visible: They hope, by this, to escape the Charge, to throw a Mist before the Eyes of the Devout, and defend their Zeal, that is often more than humane, and quite different from the Heavenly. But at the Bottom, this Language fignifies nothing, or leads to Enthusiasm. We must therefore guard against these general Maxims, and be atraid, that it is a Raihnels to judge to generally of others by themselves.

Passion, that magnifies all Objects, puts Men upon Exaggeration, and upon universal Propositions. Preachers would do well to think of this; they involve all their Auditory in the same Condemnation, and, by this means, they who deserve it, are not moved at it: For we are not much disturbed at a Fault that is universal. The Pleasure of Censuring is a dangerous Snare. Under Pretext of a Defire to amend all the World, they correct none. No Man is alarmed at the Desects that are common to him with other Men; he is not ashamed or vexed at them: It is for this Reason, that Satyr is without Essect, when it is too general; it casts Men into Indolence or Discourage-

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MAXIMS too general are, in their Turn, the Source of a thousand Prejudices, and out-of-the-way Digressions, both in Theory and Practice. Tho' we have never so little Inclination for a Thing, we undertake it, and whereon do we found our Assurance of Success? It has succeeded with two or three; and this is enough to reckon in general on the Easiness and Safety of the Execution. He is a Man of Letters; therefore he has the Defects which are observed in some or more of them. Exceptions perplex us, universal Decisions please.

ACCORDING to the Circumstances, the Application of general Maxims ought to vary, and, very often, the same Reason that dictated them, directs us to abandon Vol. II.

them again. I have known some Persons, who, in a Prepossession that young Men ought to converse with those that are above them, always shunned their Equals, and affected to change their Friends, as they were advanced themselves.

FROM this Forwardness to conclude universally, arise desective Systems; that is, on Principles that are extended to too many Subjects. Sylvius looked for the Cause of all Distempers in the Duodenum: Another will deduce them all from Worms: Each is a Principle desective, be-

cause it is too general.

THEY, who were formerly honoured with the Name of Philosophers, and raised to be Masters over others, did not always reason with more Circumspection than the Vulgar. Many of their general Rules are only drawn from fome Observations made in Haste. For instance, that famous Maxim, Degrees do not vary the Species. But how was it introduced into the Number of Maxims? Bodies were distributed into feveral Classes, which they called Species, which Distribution owes its Original to the Senses more than to Reason, and to the Nature of Things. Then they perceived, that Fire, tho' it grew brighter and warmer, yet was not the more Fire; and a Knife not the less a Knife for being blunt. Thus they ran over some Works of Nature and Art, in which they verified this Maxim, to make the general Rule of the Species. Yet, it is by Degrees we go from too great a Parsimony, which is a Vice, to an honest Thrift, and from that to Liberality, which is a Virtue; and it is by carrying on the fame Degrees that we. arrive at Prodigality, which is another Vice. It is likewise by Degrees that we may pass successively from Cruelty to Severity, to Good Humour, to Softness, to Indifference. Within two Paces of the Fire, you feel an agreeable Warmth, within two Fingers you fcorch yourfelf. In proportion as Motion in Water lessens, from hot it becomes lukewarm, and then cold; yet Hot and Cold pass for Qualities of a different Species: Go on to leffen Motion, and you will come at last to Rest. What a world of Distinctions must a Man use to support a Maxim grounded only on Authority? A false Way of Philosophising has introduced some Rules, by the Authority of which, Men have pretended to exclude all folid Reasoning from Schools. That of Des Cartes, for Instance, is quite opposite to the Maxims, which the Peripatetics look upon as the Principles of good Sense, tho' they are only founded upon some Prejudices

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PARTII. the Art of THINKING. 179 judices and hasty Consequences, as we shall see by this Instance.

Dogs, Foxes, and Wolves differ only in Sieze, as also Hares and Rabbits. And to make Use of Examples that are more simple, the *Peripatetics* call the Motion of Descent a natural Motion, and the Motion upwards a violent

Motion.

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YET when a Pendulum, after its Descent, rises again, this is the same continued Motion. The nearer it comes to a Perpendicular, the small Arcs it describes come nearer to horizontal Lines; and as they go farther from that same perpendicular Situation, the little Arcs it describes are more elevated, and they pass from one of these Motions to the other, by Differences and Degrees of an infinite Smallness. If a Body should fall to the Center of the Earth, in a right Line, when it arrives there, its Motion would be no more annihilated, than that of a Pendulum, that is come to the lowest Point of its Descent. Therefore the same Motion will still continue, and while it does continue, it will alter the Species; it will ascend, and be called a violent Motion.

I readily believe, that many Observations made by the Senses, when they have agreed together, have given room to general Maxims. But some Men have entirely assented to the Report of the Senses, which others have only looked upon as meer Items that called them to a more attentive Inquiry. They have therefore consulted the Ideas of the Understanding, and it is from the Necessity of their Agreement, that they have concluded, that a Proposition containing them is universally true. How often has Idleness been countenanced by the Maxim, That we can say nothing New? And yet, in what Posture should we have been, if we always took it in a literal Sense?



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CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of Compounded Propositions.

Definitions.



TEN a Proposition is considered as a Conjunction of one fingle Subjest with one single Attribute, it is called Simple; but when it takes in more Subjects and Attributes, it is called Compounded.

WHEN a compounded Proposition contains many Subjects, it may be refolved into as many fimple ones, as it has Subjects in it: And if, besides this, it contains several Attributes, on comparing each Subject fuecessively with all the Attributes, you will make again, with each Subject, as many fimple Propositions, as you find Attributes. Two Subjects and two Attributes will make twenty five: This is the Ratio Duplicata of the Mathematicians.

II. WHEN all the Attributes are affirmed, or denied of the same Subject; or when you Division. affirm or deny the same Attribute of all Sub-jects, the School calls these Propositions Congregative: But when one Attribute is denied, and another affirmed of the fame Subject; or, when the fame Attribute is affirmed of one Subject, and denied of the other, they take the Name of Segregative.

THE Congregative are divided into two Kinds; either they present a simple Conjunction, or, besides that, lay down a Dependance; the first are called Copulative, the fecond Connexive or Conditional.

THAT a Copulative may deferve the Name of True; it is needful, that this Quality should agree with all the fimple Propositions, of which it is compounded; for you must precisely affirm all you affirm, and deny all you deny, otherwise you are in an Error in the whole, or in part. Thus a copulative Proposition may be opposed by as many

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many Ways as it contains fimple Propositions. Knowledge, Probity, Pleasures, Power, Riches, contribute to our Satisfaction. All this is true. Knowledge, Virtue, and Titles are necessary to Felicity. The third Member of the Proposition is false; and the Proposition does not enumerate all the Parts that compose it, as, according to Truth, it ought to do.

III. WHETHER in a conditional Propo- Of the Truth fition, the two Parts that compole it (whereof of conditional the first is the Principle, the following is the Propositions.

Consequence) make each of them one Truth; as, if it be good to know, it is good to study; or be talfe, taken separately; as if 2 be half 6, 4 is half 12. He who advances fuch a Proposition, means to affirm, if he talks confistently with himself, that you must agree to the lecond Part, because you agree to the first. When this Necessity takes Place, the conditional Proposition is owned for true; what it lays down is true: You must, as it declares, either reject the one, or the other Parts, or admit both of them. We use these on such Occasions, as it is proper to reduce him, with whom we dispute to this Neceffity.

IV. IF a Man pretends that the first Part of Causal contains the Cause of the second, the con- Propositions.

nexive Proposition is not only conditional, it is also causal: These must not be confounded. Every Cauial is properly Connexive; for there is always a necessary Connexion between the Cause and the Effect; but every Conditional is not Caufal; for there are other Connexions befides that of the Cause and the Effect. If the Barometer rifes, we shall have fair Weather; if the Sun and the Dog-Star rife at the fame Hour, the Heats redouble: This is true. But the Antecedent does not express the Cause of the Confequent.

THE Mind of Man, which loves to imagine the Cautes of that which strikes it, and to proceed nimbly, flatters itself that it has met with a Cause in the first Appearance of a Connexion that prefents itself. I shall content myself with giving this Intimation in two Words; for I have enlarged sufficiently in the First Part of this Work on the Methods by which we may arrive at a Discovery of true Caules, and separate them from a thousand Illusions, which

look like Caufes.

Of Propositions compounded in Senfe.

V. COPULATIVE Propositions are not always expressly marked by Conjunctions, proper to them, no more than the Connexive. When, for Instance, I say, the Night comes on, Fear increases: this has the Force of a causal.

Proposition; Fear increases, because the Night comes on. When I fay, We draw more Advantage from the Epiftles of Pliny, than of Cicero; this Proposition is Copulative, and resolved into these three Assirmative: The Epistles of Pliny are instructive: Those of Cicero are instructive: Those of Pliny have the Preference. You shall go thither. I will follow, means, You and I will go to the same Place. There are two Subjects, You and I; the Attribute is, to

arrive at one certain Place.

THIS fort of compound Propositions, whose Particles do not plainly shew the Composition, or the Kind, are called compounded in Sense; and by the Schools, Exponibiles. Yet they are not harder to unravel than others; if you do not stay barely upon the Words, but attend to Things, and not judge till you examine and know them. We must be always asking ourselves, What is he upon? Is he upon more than one thing? The Answers will furnish the Subjects: What does he say of each? Does he affirm only one Attribute, or deny more than one? The Reply will bring them up in order.

THESE Rules are fo simple, that I need not give myfelf the Trouble to infift upon them in a Work that may be read by other Persons besides young Scholars. there are few that are not guilty of mistaking herein. Scarce does a Conversation last an Hour, but one Person charges another with an Opinion that he has not, and opposes a Proposition which nobody advanced: And how is this? The fame Proposition offers more than one Sense; and to have the pleasure of objecting, we seize upon that which does not appear to be well founded, without being in pain whether we are right or no, or whether we do ill to make others think fo.

Of Disjun-

VI. WHEN we barely oppose several Propositions, and are content to fay, we cannot admit them all, but must receive some, and reject others, without specifying which

we incline to, the fegregative Proposition that contains these opposite Parts, is called Disjunctive. It is extended, or it is not extended: A Rectilinear Figure is made of three Sides, or of four, or of a greater number. Either the

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Man is free from, or deserves no Reproach, no-more than

any Praise.

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WE use these Propositions to dispose an Antagonist to receive one of its Parts, when we shall have proved to him the Falfity of the others; or to reject the others, when we shall have established the Truth of one. Now that they may ferve this End, without Mistake, it is necessary: I. That the Parts be effectually opposite and incompatible; without which, there will be no room to conclude to the Proof of one from the Rejection of the other, no more than from the Rejection of these to the Allowance of that. 2. That there be an exact Enumeration; if, for Example, I should fay, a Figure is inclosed in 3, or 4, or 5 Sides; it is plain I should be mistaken; for it may be inclosed in 6 or 7. &c. A Gentleman must go to the Wars, or follow the Court, or reside in his Seat, to treat his Neighbours, hunt, and exact upon his Tenants. Is this all? And must he be put in the number of those that despise Learning, and undervalue the Glory of ferving the Public by Study. and virtuous Actions.

It is easier to be assured of the Opposition of the Parts of a Disjunctive, than of an exact Enumeration of all the Parts; for if we will not be decisive about which we are not sufficiently informed, we shall certainly know, if attentive, whether the Idea of one Part contains the Exclusion of the other. But the narrow Bounds of the Mind of Man are the Cause, that sometimes the most important Cases are hidden from it, without its perceiving it, or suspecting that any thing escapes it. However limited, it is yet assured, that what it sees is really such as it sees it to be; yet it is not assured for that, that it has seen all, and omitted nothing. We have laid it down for a Rule in the First Part, that contradictory Oppositions are exact, and take in all; we have spoken of the Precautions that must be taken to make them, and use them without Error; and all that is

applicable in this place.

WHEN Seneca, to shew the Danger of living on the public Stage of the World, employs this Disjunctive,

Necesse est, autimiteris, aut oderis.

Ep. VII.

Exceptive

You must either imitate, or hate.

His Enumeration is infufficient: We may despise the Vicious; we may likewise pity them. We may hate their Vices.

Vices, and not their Persons, and instead of copying their bad Examples, we may take a charitable Care to afford

them good Patterns.

It is chiefly in Matters of Practice, that it is hard to make an exact Enumeration, because they infinitely vary in their Circumstances, whatever Attention the most knowing and practised Men give to them; there are Cases that elude all their Penetration; and these unforeseen Cases are often sufficient to make the best concerted Schemes prove abortive.

VII. WHEN in the Compass of a segreof Discretives. gative Proposition we declare what we affirm, and distinguish what we deny, such a
Proposition is called Discretive. He is not learned, but he
is wise: This fort of Propositions would be ridiculous, if
their Parts were incompatible; for it would be intolerable
to say, He is rich, but he is not poor; he tasks, but he is
not silent. Therefore it is necessary, that they may agree,
but not actually agree to what you speak of. Since in a
Discretive, you deny and affirm, it is plain, that to avoid
a Mistake, it is necessary both to affirm and to deny, according to the Truth, and that the Proposition passes for
false, if one of its Parts be so.

ALL Discretive Propositions are not equally easy to be known; when you mean Words, and follow no other Guide, this, for Example, is a Discretive: he relaxes his Studies; for it affirms, that he has studied with Application, but does not continue to do it with the same Diligence.

A general Rule. VIII. I'm is not necessary to be always looking for Expressions, in which the Sense may be somewhat embarrassed, and make an exact List of them. They that consider

Things, attend to them, and carefully ask themselves, what and how many Things a Man affirms or denies, will distinguish without the help of any other Art, the Propositions that are collected to form one that is compounded.

THEREFORE I will not dwell upon the Exceptive, nor the Exclusive, which are a kind of Discretive; for this, Of Sinners only the Penitent shall be saved, is reducible to this other, The Penitent shall be saved, but not other Sinners, which is Discretive; or to this, which is Exceptive, Sinners shall not be saved, except the Penitent, or, if it does not happen that they repent.

THE Exclusion of a Thing has fometimes more, and fometimes less Extent. We determine it by those helps that

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that ferve to distinguish the true Sense of an obscure Difcourse, and especially by the Knowledge we have of the Things that are spoken of. Thus when I say, Attention alone will manifest this or that to us, I do not pretend that other Helps may not contribute to it; but I declare, that they are not absolutely necessary, and that Attention may fuffice: On the contrary, when I fay, GOD only can make us perfectly happy, I deny that any other Object has that Power. But in the Example alledged above, Penitents alone shall be faved, the Extent of the Exclusion ought to be confined by the Subject spoken of, and be limited to those who are capable of Repentance. For an Infant that has lived but three Days, shall it be excluded from Heaven, because it has not known, nor practifed Repentance? The Manner in which the Terms are ranged in a Proposition, does not contribute to the Discernment of what is said, any farther than by making it more or less difficult. We must not suppose in the Language of Men an Exactness, that is often wanting, nor by Consequence give a Sense to their Words, which could not be given to them, but upon a Supposition that they have expressed themselves with a perfect Exactness. It is more reasonable to believe, that a Man did not express himself so exactly as he should, than to charge him with extravagant Thoughts. Sometimes he does not think of correcting an equivocal Word, because the Absurdity of it may not come readily into his Mind. Sometimes again the Obscurity of Expressions ought not to be put on the Account of those that use them: The Poverty of a Language reduces Men to this Necessity, as well as the Tyranny of Custom, which will not pardon a Novelty of Terms, or of Expressions, tho designed to make a Thing clearer.

PROPOSITIONS that are most plainly compounded, are called compounded in Expression; and they are called compounded in Sense, that require a little more Attention to distinguish the Parts. There are some that are com-

pounded in both these respects at the same time.

(t) If you brand me with Ingratitude, when you return me what I gave you, the I do not want it, you are more ungrateful to me, in forcing me to ask my own.

WHEN

⁽¹⁾ Si mihi non desideranti redderes, ingratus esses, quanto ingratior es, qui desiderare me cogis? Sen, de Ben. Lib, VI. Cap. X.

WHEN a Man speaks thus, he affirms, I. That a Man is ungrateful, when he disobliges those to whom he would pay an Acknowledgment. 2. That he is so, when he will not return a Kindness. 3. That he is so in a greater Degree. 4. That one of these Propositions is a Proof of the other.

IX. THO' you may substitute in the place of a Proposition two others that are equiva-Imaginary Composition. lent to it, it does not follow, that you ought to look upon it as compounded. It ought to

pass for a simple Proposition, when it has only need of one Proof to establish the Truth of it. When, for Example, I affirm, that Gold is heavier than Lead, a Man may fay, if he pleases, that I deny they are of equal Weight, or, that Lead is heavier. But one fingle Experiment is fufficient to prove at once, that Gold carries it above Lead in Weight. I alledge this Example, because I have seen a famous Author, who has given into this false Subtilty. There would be no End of refolving compound Propositions into their simple ones. Lead is not lighter, would mean, 1. That it is not of equal Weight. 2. Gold is less light: And this would be refolvable into two others; which would be a ridiculous, as well as useless Circle.



ought notes be but on the fourthing of a CHAP. X.

Of Complex Propositions.

Definition.



PROPOSITION may include a great number of Terms, without passing for one that is compounded, when many of those Terms are joined to form the total Idea of one fingle Subject,

or, of one fingle Attribute. Such a Subject is not fimple; yet, tho' compounded, it is not looked upon as two or more Subjects, it is one Whole. The same must be said of a compound Attribute. Propositions that contain a Subject or an Attribute thus compounded, are called Complex. Here are Examples of them: Reasonable Men prefer

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fer their Duty to their Pleasure. Mortal Men comfort themselves by the Hopes of Immortality.

II. THE Addition that makes a Term complex, fometimes determines and con- Division. fines the Signification of it; at other times,

it only unfolds it, and lays down nothing that was not contained before, tho' less evidently, in the Term to which it was joined, tho' less expressly. The first Addition is called Determinative, and the second Explicative. You see that in the former Instance, this in the latter, above. If you change a Term that is complex by a determinative Addition, into a simple Term, by the Retrenchment of the Addition, the Proposition will become false, from true, as it was before; for it is false to say simply and in general of a Man, that he prefers his Duty to Pleasure; but the Additions of the second kind may be retrenched without a Consequence, and a Man may say in general, that Men comfort themselves in the Hope of Immortality.

III. Тно' the Explicative Addition may be retrenched from a Proposition, without The Usefulness doing any Prejudice to the Truth of it, yet of Complex it does not follow, that it is always useless; Terms.

for it often contains the Reason why the Attribute agrees with the Subject, or else presents the Subject under some Idea that heightens the Force of the

Proposition, and makes it more easily observed.

Thus the Idea of Mortal makes us more sensible how needful it is to be supported by the Hope of another Life; and when I say of Men, that they easily forget themselves, I conceive better, that they ought to be always fortified by wise Instructions, and good Examples. The Proneness of Men to forget themselves, makes the Necessity of those Helps I mention apparent. When the Addition has this Force, we must not fail to insist upon it, when we undertake to explain a Proposition.

IV. THE Addition that makes a Subject or Attribute complex, is fometimes underflood, and at other times so involved, that

a Term may appear simple, tho' indeed it be complex. Thus, when a Man says, The Sovereign commands or forbids such or such a thing, we must understand the Sovereign, who governs the Nation where he lives, or the Sovereign of whom he speaks: So again, when he says, A Devotee seldom corrects himself, the Word Hypocritical is to be understood, and must be joined to that of Devotee. (Devot; faux Devot.)

ACCESSORY Ideas change fimple Terms into complex; for they increase or weaken their Force; they modify the Sense of them. Custom then changes a Term from fimple to complex, and makes it complex in one Sense or another. This is done by the very Tone of the Voice, and Air of Pronunciation. There is sometimes a Delicacy, and fometimes a Malignity in making others think more than we faid to them.

V. EPITHETS contain incidental Propositions, that make those into which you Of Epithets. insert them to be complex. Therefore they are useless, when they do not clear, or give a more lively Sense of what is faid. They are still worse, when they are unfuitable to the Subject, or paint it with Features that are common to it with others.

DEVOTEES, and they who imitate their Language, who, of all Men, do not think the most of what they fay, are extremely wont to load their Discourses with ill-chosen Epithets, the Divine Goodness; the Divine Attributes; the Divine Wisdom; as if he who says GOD, did not say all; and as if some forgot that all in God is Divine. When they speak of his Goodness to them, it is always a Goodness not only infinite, but very particular; and how do they know, that they are more the Objects of the Goodness of Goo than others, and that Providence takes fo particular a Care of them? Yet I am persuaded, there is less Presumption in this Language, than Inadvertency. When we are defirous to fpeak fomething that is great, and can think of nothing but what is very indifferent, we take in a Pomp of Words to supply the Meanness of our Conceptions.

EPITHETS are in their due Place, and have a good Effect, when they ferve to make those Propositions complex, that would not have fo much Force, if they were altogether simple. But an Epithet that adds nothing, and only lengthens out a thing, is a Proof of Affectation without Judgment.

Of Reduplicative Propoli-

tions.

VI. COMPLEX Propositions carry the Name of Reduplicative, when the Addition that changes a fimple Term into a complex, contains the precise Reason for which the Attribute agrees with the Subject; and

this reduplicative Addition is sometimes express, at other times less sensible. When I say, Pleasure, as far as it is Pleasure, is a Good; that is, as far as a Good means an agreeable agreeable State, and one that is in itself preserable to an uneasy State; these Propositions are manifestly Reduplicative: But when I say, Virtue, that makes our Inchinations conformable to those of GOD, is the essential Way to true Felicity; this Proposition, without having the Terms, has all the Force of a Reduplicative; as if I should say, Virtue, as far as it makes our Inclinations conformable to those of GOD, is the essential Way to perfect Happiness.

IT is manifest, that a Reduplicative should contain two Truths; the first is this, that the Attribute agrees with the Subject; the second, that it does so for the Rea-

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Some Times Propositions that appear to be compounded are only complex. Affliction and Anguish fignify a very oppressive Affliction. Honour, Glory, and Immortality, imply an Immortality that is glorious in the highest Degree. The Water, and the Spirit, a spiritual Water, or rather a Purification of the Soul. Pastors and Teachers fignify knowing Pastors, and such as apply themselves to enlighten others, who give their Flocks the Knowledge of the Truth, which is the Nourishment of the Soul; they are not Pastors, but in this Sense; and Teachers that do not perform that Duty, are of no Use to the Church.

WE see we must be attentive to Things, and form just Ideas of them, that we may not be mistaken in explaining

the Ways of speaking that are not perfectly simple.

WII. In the Schools, Men subtilifed very much on certain complex Propositions, Of Modal whose Complexion fell, said they, on the Propositions.

They made four kinds of it: they Copula. disputed, whether there was not a greater number; they taught how to separate the Truth of the Complexion from the Truth of the Proposition itself. Loss of Time! Superfluous Refinements! When I say, it is necessary that a Body be divisible, or, it is impossible that a Body be penetrable, without informing myself whether the Terms necessary and impossible tall only on the Copula, to modity it, in order to give the Name of medal to these Propositions on this account, I have nothing to do but to follow my ordinary Rule, and to ask myself, what is he upon? upon Body. What does he fay of it? He affirms in one, that it is divisible; and in the other, he denies that it is penetrable: Does he say no more? He says farther, that, Divisibility necessarily agrees to Body, and assures me, not only that Penetrability does not agree to it, but that it cannot. Thus this kind of Propositions is really compounded, and resolves itself into the simple.

Of the Reduction of Propolitions. VIII. I WILL pass by the Subtilties in which they have taken a pleasure to indulge themselves about the Reduction of Propositions. I own, I should be tempted to expose the Follies that amused the old Schools

to my Reader, did I know that he would reap from this reading the important Advantage of fuspecting what passed thro' their Hands, and taking nothing from them without Examination: But as few have a Taste for the Care of examining, few likewise would profit by this Digression; and sewer still would take the Trouble of reading attentively those nauseous Trisles.

IX. WHAT they teach likewise about Oppositions, Contradictories, Contraries, Sub-Of Opposition. contraries, does not feem to me to be of any Service. When I know how to examine the Truth of a Proposition in itself, I have nothing to do to inform myself whether it be contradictory, contrary, or fubcontrary to others that are true or falfe. To what purpose is it to know that this, Every Man is mortal, being true, its Contradictory, Some Man is not mortal, is false; or that these two, Every Man is a Physician; No Man is a Physician, may be both falfe, but not both true? How, fay I, do I affure myself of all this? I form to myself exact Ideas of every Subject, and Attribute, and I compare them together. The general Rule being therefore of clear, eafy, and immediate Use, why should I load myself with pretended Helps, that are still more puzzling, and themselves draw their Force from the general Rule.

The End of the Second Part.

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ART of THINKING.

PART III.

Of REASONING.

CHAP. I.

Of the Manner of stating a Question.



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O judge is to compare two Ideas, and acknowledge that the fecond is contained in the first. Now it often

What Reasoning adds to simple Judg-ment.

happens, that we have not an Idea of a compounded Object, full and exact enough to be fure, whether it contains a certain Attribute, which

we compare with it: and tho' that Object really contains that Attribute, if we have only an imperfect Idea of it, it may be a clear Idea of the Attribute of that Subject, which is the only thing that is wanting to form a perfect Judgment. What mutt a Man do in such a Case, to pass from Doubt to Certainty,

and be entitled to fay, I fee that the Idea of the Subject contains the Idea of the Attribute, or the Exclusion of it? It is visible, that he must make the Idea of the Subject fuller, if he will fee in it what he did not fee before. And fince an Idea cannot become more full, but by an Addition of some other Ideas, it follows, that to see an Attribute contained in a Subject, in which you did not see it before, you must enlarge the Idea of the Subject, and join to what you know of it already, some other Ideas, which bring into it that of the Attribute. Thus to clear the Relation of two Ideas by the means of a third, that inferts the second into the former, is what we call Reasoning.

EVERY body knows the Earth under the Idea of a vast and solid Mass, containing Plants, and Animals, &c. but every one does not know that the Figure of it is round. To convince a Man that doubts of it, I must amplify the Idea I already have of the Earth, till I perceive Roundness among its Attributes. In this design, I should let him know, that the Shadow of a Body round, and smaller than the Luminary, always forms a perfect Cone: and by the means of this Instruction, he will find the Property of forming a regular shady Cone ever contained in the Idea of a round Body. I then prove by the Experience of the Eclipses of the Moon, that the Shadow of the Earth has always that Figure. Here therefore is a conic Shadow contained in the Idea of the Shadow of the Earth. In this Idea of the Earth, enlarged by this Remark, he owns the Property of round Bodies, and is thus led to an Idea of the Earth which contains that of Roundness.

To reason justby we must first state the Question. II. WHEN the Idea of the Attribute is immediately feen to be contained in that of the Subject, we have no need of Reasoning; but when those two Ideas are too imperfect to decide upon the Relation they have to one another, affirmatively or negatively, in

order to clear them, and carry our Views farther, to see a doubtful Question changed into a certain Conclusion, all that is practicable to this End may be reduced to three Heads, which we will treat of in order. 1. To settle well the State of the Question. 2. To find out some Idea that may clear it. 3. To make a just Application of that Idea. That is, unless we will decide at random, and talk like Parrots, we must first know what we are upon; have an Idea of the Subject to know what the Question turns upon; and of the Attribute, to know what that Property

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PART III. the Art of THINKING. 193 is, which we doubt whether we ought to affirm or deny of the Subject; and to speak all at once, when we are about comparing, not two Words, but two Ideas, we must have those two Ideas.

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III. WHEN we attend to these two Ideas, we are to examine, whether they be The first Rule. simple or compound; if they be compound, as it commonly happens, we are to resolve them into simple ones; and by this means, of one Question we may make several, which must each be discussed apart.

IV. WE aik, for Example, whether Recreation be necessary to a Man? Man is Instances, compounded of Body and Soul; he that says Recreation, means Rest and Pleasure. So that here are four Questions: 1. Whether Repose be necessary to the Body? 2. Whether it be so to the Soul? 3. Whether Pleasure be necessary to the Body? 4. Whether it be so to the Soul? Besides this, there is an absolute and a relative Necessary to Body and Soul, for prolonging natural Life in personal Union, or to make one act with more Ease and Success, to give the Body Force, and the Mind Penetration and Justness in Thinking, and to both

Is Love independent of the Laws of Justice? This Question may turn on Right, or Fact. One may likewise demand, whether Love in its first Rise prevents our Choice and Deliberation; and whether we can, as we find it proper, sheck the first Motions of it, or allow it to advance?

When an Author, to decry the Eloquence of the Pulpit, says, that Vices appear less odious when they are delicately painted, and represented in pleasing Colours; I ask him, whether some Descriptions, as gross and distasteful as the Vices themselves are, would not force the Audience to leave the Preacher; and whether they would not keep from his Sermons, at least as much as from the Vice? I then ask him to define Eloquence, and whether delicate and beautiful Expressions to disguise what is odious, in order to make it amiable or supportable in the hearing, be conformable or opposite to that Eloquence.

SUPPOSE the Question be, whether all Men are equally happy? This is a Question very much compounded. Have they the same Pleasures, or Pains, or Sufferings, or what are equivalent? Do their Satisfactions balance their Mortifications so, that the one do not increase, but the Vol. II.

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others grow up in the same Proportion? Are all actually, or can all be happy, one equally with another? And is this with respect to what is essential, or accessory to Felicity?

Is the Question be, whether Pleasure be a Good; whether it makes us solidly happy? Define the Terms, and put the State of the Question on an exact Definition of the Terms; you will find it decided, and there will be no

more Controversy.

It is asked, whether a Thing may be, or whether it is; and when a Man is not attentive to the State of the Question, it may be pretended, that one of the Parts has been proved, when all that has been done, has been only to establish the other.

INTEREST and Ambition may engage Men to put on an Outfide of Virtue. This is enough to give a Handle to those who love to make real Virtue pass for a Chimera, to conclude there is no such Thing, and that Men only bestow that Name on Interest and Ambition in Disguise.

Knowing is not natural to a Man, ask where that Defire of Knowing is not natural to a Man, ask where that Defire was, in the Time when Kyrie ekison and Paralipomenon were the Names of Saints. Define what you mean by natura, and the Objection will fall to the Ground.

When the State of a Question is not well determined, which is very usual in Matters not clearly understood, oftentimes Men may agree without being of the same Mind; because they use the same Words, but think differently; and as often again, they may fall out without thinking differently, because they have not the same Value for

the fame Expressions.

When Men dispute about the Nature and Existence of Liberty, if they would establish, what they do not do, more distinctly the State of the Question, perhaps it might be one of the easiest to decide. But without mentioning the Darkness which the zealous Disputes of the Divines, and the Spirit of Party, have spread over this important Matter, the Word Liberty is very equivocal. Some think it a State of determining a Man's self to any Side with the same Facility; and finding this contrary to Experience, they conclude there is no such Thing. Others take it for a certain mysterious Faculty, that presides, as Queen, over the rest; to which the Senses, Imagination, and Understanding present their Ideas and Pretensions; which sometimes vouchsafes to examine them, and sometimes is pleased

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pleased to use its Power and Authority, and determining itself by pure Fancy, chuses blind-fold A Man may fairly reject a Supposition of this Nature; it is wrong to distribute the Soul into divers Faculties, as you divide the humane Body into different Members. A free Soul is Thinking Being, that has Ideas and Sensations arising in it; or, whole different States are, the having Ideas, and the having Senfations. From these arise Defires, Inclinations, which this Thinking Being follows, moderates, fufpends, according as it finds it proper. When it determines itself, after a full Perfuasion that it does well, it is wife. When it dispends its Action, on its not feeing very clearly, whether it be reasonable, and regular, and when it waits for furer Light to reloive upon, it is still wifer. Some can manage themselves easily after this Method; others cannot take Pains, or refift fome Inclinations, without a great deal of Pain; and perhaps some, by the Force of certain Propentions, to which they have long yielded, lofe the Power of refilting them. yurtuon on betafoil that

THE natural Bent of Men to be fatisfy'd with Words, is a great Hindrance to the well-stating of a Question: It is a Weakness I am not used to, and the more Examples I fee of it, the more I am furprized. It you meet with Musick and Dancing in a House, and tell a Devotee it is a merry Meeting, he hears the News without any Offence; but if you give the Name of a Ball to this Amusement, you pierce him to the Heart. If a Man goes to fee a Juggler; have Patience, it is a usual Word; neither the Conscience nor the Bas suffer by it. But a Company of Comedians is come to Town: Oh horrible! We read to Youth the Comedies of Terence and Plantus, and he that is the best read in them is the most extolled. But if you fee a Play of Corneille, or Mohere, you are undone. But they raife the Passions! Well, what Objects do not raise them in a Heart that is disposed for it? Is it from Comedy that the Birds learn their tender Notes ? for that all, which flies in the Air, goes upon the Earth, or swims in the Waters, is instructed to love? Is it from the Stage, that Devotees have learnt the Dangers of an Amour? No, it is not here that we learn to love; but if a Man will reflect on what is here represented, he will learn from it not to love lightly; and, in general, to diffruit his Pathons. It is well known, that Comedy made formerly a Part of the Worship of the Gods, and that the Feasts of the Pagans were passed in Sports and Dances. The Christians VOL. II.

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drove them from the Stage for that reason. The Preachers, who were afterwards called Fathers, were very glad to find formething to fay against Comedy; and they gave a Career to their Zeal on that Subject. All their Arguments were good against an odious Theme. Zelus arma minifirst. This Name passing thus from one Mouth to another, loaded with difgraceful Epithets, is become hideous and carries its own Condemnation along with it in the Minds of those, whose tender Consciences make it a Law

to condemn without Examination.

WHEN a Man's Capacity is above the common Level, the World pretends, that he ought to have the Wisdom of an Angel; and the least Sullies are enough to make him suspected of Irreligion. Let us examine this Reasoning a little: We would know what to think about a Man's Honesty. Do we ask, whether it be perfect? and, in case it be not; do we alk, whether, when he happens to commit a Fault, he has acted against the Light of Conscience, that dictated the contrary ? or, whether some sudden inpression has not obscured his Ideas for some Time? Whether some false Reasoning has seduced him; or whether he is fenfible of all the Evil he has done, and of the Neglect of his Duty? In a Word, whether he has carelessly neglected the Practice of Virtue, or wilfully despised it?

Some Questions are not hard, nor surprising, any farther than they are indiffictly proposed. Persons who are Lovers of the Falle-Marvellous have started this Question in Dioptricks: Whence is it? that two Convex Glasses shew the Object inverted, a third rectificant, and pet a fourth does not invert it again? The Question thus proposed, makes us inquire into the Reason of a certain Effect, in the Inequality of Numbers; after which we admire, that an equal Number should have the Effect of an unequal But the Childishness of this Question will be evident to any one that understand these Matters; and they must be understood to know the State of the Question. Since two Convex Glasses have only the Effect of one, the Object appears always inverted, though you make use of three. For this very Reason, four Glasses ought to be reckoned for no more than three, and will produce only the Effect of them.

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V. FOR want of rightly stating a Que-What follows fion, Men dispute ridiculously; they do not a Neglect of understand one another, or themselves. They this Rule. pronounce the fame Words, and have not .II .Io /the

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the fame Ideas (u). One denies, the other affirms; because one takes a compounded Question in one Sense, other in another; so that both are in the right; each has good Reasons on his Side, and neither can overthrow the Sentiment of his Adversary.

IT is not fufficient to have stated the Question justly; but you must not forget it; or alledge Proots for it, that suppose it otherwise than it is. This Fault is very frequent among Preachers in their Applications: They require more than they have proved we ought to do; and heir Exhortations are nothing to the Purpose, being founded only on their own Authority, and the Warmth of their Discourses.

THEY that love to dispute, are apt to forget every Moment the State of a Question, against which they have nothing to oppose. They are bufy to prove what is not contested, and to combat what is already given up. This Itch of Contradiction, whereever it prevails, retains much of that Pedantry, that reigns in the Schools (x).

WHEN we do not exactly state a Question, we often lofe the Sight of it, and alledge Realons to prove it, that have no relation to it. This is common in Questions that rum upon Comparisons; we forget that a Thing is confidered comparatively, and we advance such Arguments that tend only to serve a Question, stated in a simple and absolute Sense.

WE would know, whether it be better to affift Nature by fome Remedies, or forbear lending her any Affiftance? They who are no Lovers of Physic, bring on this Head Experiments of People, that have died, notwithstanding all their Precautions, while others have recovered in a Neglect of them. Now this would be right, if it were afarmed, there was no possible Recovery without Remedies, and that all the Physicians were intallible.

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⁽⁴⁾ Quid sit illud, de quo disputetur, explanetur, ne vagari, cogatur oratio. Cis. de Orat. Lib. 1.

Ne duo, que separatim tractanda funt, misceamus. Sen.

⁽x) Tria Genera sunt Vitæ, inter quæ, quod sir optimum queri solet. Unum voluptati, alterum contemplationi, tertium actioni. Primum, deposita contentione, depositoque odio, quod implacabile diversa sequencibus indiximus, videamus, an hac omnia ad idem sub alio titulo perveniant, &c. Sen. de Otto Sap. Cap. XXXII.

UNBELIEVERS attack Religion in general by feveral Objections that concern only the Opinions of some particular Sect, or the Abuses that some make of Religion, to ferve their Interests by it. You need only define what is to be understood by Religion, and the Objections. with which they oppose it, will no longer affect it.

DOES it become (fays Montagne, Book I. Ch. XXXIX.) two Roman Confuls, supreme Magistrates of the greatest Republic of the World, to Spend their Time in modelling and drawing up an elegant Epiftle, that they may be reputed well-skilled in their Mother Tongue? Could a meer School Master do worse, that gets his Living by it? But before we condemn them, we should inquire, whether they made Letters their principal Affair; whether they aimed at nothing by them, but to make a Show of their Eloquence, and the Purity of their Style: Whether it does not become Great Men, for their Diversion, without neglecting their weigh tier Employments, to give Models of Politeness, in writing

familiar Letters

WHEN the same Montagne (Book III, Chap. XII.) fays, In other Cases, what we have bought, we carry home, in some Vessel, and there make it a Rule to examine the Worth of it; how, and at what Time we shall make Use of it. But as for the Sciences, we cannot put them in any other Vessel than the Mind: We swallow them up in the very purchasing of them, and go from the Market, either immediately tainted, or improved. - - - And it is richly indeed, to accomplish the Vow of Poverty, if we join like reise with it that of Spirit. We want no Doctrine to him at our Ease, And Socrates tells us, That it is in us, and the Manner of finding it, and giving ourselves the Aid of it. All this Sufficiency of ours, above what is natural, is almost vain and superfluous: It is much if it does not bad and disturb us more than serve us. Paucis opus est liters ad metem bonam.

ALL these Paradoxes will vanish, and all you read in this Passage will appear to be only a multitude of Words when you have clearly stated the Questions: Does not a Man expose himself to the Danger of Error and Vice, when he adopts the Lessons of the first that speaks? Does a Man run any Rifque in hearing what another propoles, if he examines it with all the Care that the Fear of Mistake demands? So likewife, to decide whether Nature be fufficient, or fome Study ought to be joined with it we must know, whether he speaks of Nature, all brutal III

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as it is, or of Nature cultivitated: Whether he goes upon what is sufficient for the Senses; for the Animal Life, and the ordinary Figure of the World; or the Reasonable Life, the Perfection of our Faculties, and of our Nature.

WHEN we ask, whether Art or Nature makes an Orator, we must see, whether we speak of Nature singly, or of Art by itself: Whether one of the two be altogether useles? Wherein each contributes to it; Whether, in short, by the Word Art be understood Exercise, Ressection, Rules, Masters; and besides, what Exercise, what Rule, what Master?

THE Dialogue of Antony and Crassus, in the First Book of TULLY de Oratore, offers us an Instance of the usual Disputes in Conversation, when, for want of stating the Question, Men fatigue themselves without advancing at all. He was treating of the Advantages of Philosophy to an Orator: It must be owned, that one who knows the Bottom of the Heart of Man, may agitate and turn it with more Success, than if he did not know it at all. But do you think, fays Antony, that an Orator, whose Interest it is to instame the Anger of his Auditors, is any way at a Stand, because he cannot justly define what Anger is; whether it be a Heat, a Defire, a Fancy? Must be, to be able to raise this Passion, profoundly meditate on all the Disputes of the Stoicks on this Matter with the other Philosophers (y). It is one Thing to know the Paffions, and another to have studied all the Trifles that the Mind of Man has vented upon this Subject.

WHEN you would decide, whether a Man that is bent upon pleafing G o D, gives himself more Fatigue than a Courtier who is affiduous to gain the good Graces of his Prince; it is not sufficient to alledge the Force of Temptations, the Weakness of the Flesh, &c. We do not deny, but it requires a Struggle to maintain or advance his Virtue; but we compare them only with the Difficulties attending the Life of a Courtier.

tending the Life of a Courtier.

A CERTAIN Author has written a whole Book De Infelicitate Literatorum, Of the hard Fortune of Men of O4 Letters:

⁽y) Quis enim unquam Orator ineptus & gravis, cum iratum adversario judicem facere vellet, hesitavit ob eam causam, quod nesciret, quid esset iracundia, &c. Cic. de Orat. Lib. 1.

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Letters: The Title presages them more unhappy than other Men; but in the Work you find nothing besal them that does not happen to all others, to Tradesmen, to Soldiers, to Labourers.

VI. In stating a Question, it is necessary to define and compare the Terms clearly, The second putting the Definition in the Place of the Rule. Thing defined. By this Precaution, you will avoid those senseless Questions, composed of Words, which, if compared one with another, fignify nothing. There are many Terms, that appear to say a great deal, but fifted with Care, will be reduced to a very small matter. Then Questions are vain, childish, useless; they are built upon Words, and one charges upon another whatever he pleases, because he refuses to make use of the same Language. The very worthy Mr. Werenfels has written upon the Difputes of this Nature with as much Delicacy as Solidity. I shall not here transcribe the Instances he has given; and perhaps the Reasons why he has alledged no more, hinder me from enlarging upon them. They who study Controversies with a discerning Spirit, and reflect on what is daily faid in grave Assemblies, and ordinary Conversations,

A Prous Man, but one that is missed by his good Intention, and his Zeal for the Scriptures, endeavours to infpire Men with a Contempt for other Reading, and other Knowledge. Define what it is to meditate, and you will see that the Sciences, which form the Mind to Meditation, put it in our Power to discharge this Duty with more Extent and Success. Religion, says he, has the Prophets munfild, and Ceremonies to explain. Define these two Terms, and you will see that it supposes the Knowledge of the

will meet every Moment with Disputes upon Words, and

Tongues, and of History.

WHEN you define the Terms, an ill-stated Question falls to nothing. Religion proposes to us an incomprehensible God to meditate upon: And what do you meditate, when you do not know what you meditate upon?

Is you talk of Sorcery, of Magic, of Apparitions, of Familiar Spirits, &5c. one will take the Affirmative, and argue the Possibility of them. Another will proceed to maintain the Truth of some Events of this kind: Another will believe all that weak and visionary Imaginations have enlarged upon it. Some will reject only a Part of what is said; others will deride in general whatever has been produced

duced about them. Some will doubt of one, and incline to believe the others; and some will look upon all as a Chimera, and an Impossibility, on account of the Contradiction and Ridiculousness they find in certain Accounts of them. Here are many Questions on one Subject, which, by its being compounded, transforms itself by the Dispute, and the different Views of Disputants, into a great number of Subjects. But, since they do not make use of different Terms, they imagine they dispute all on the same Question, tho each maintains a several Position. Let a Man part the Questions, and define the Terms, and he will comprehend what is proper to agree upon.

THEREFORE I repeat it: You must distribute a compounded Subject into its Parts, to make many Questions of one compound Question, and examine each of them asunder: and to make this State of the Question, which is so necessary, you must also be attentive, under what Face, under what View, in what Respects, you compare the Attribute of the Question with its Subject, if you go upon a Connexion or Agreement that is meerly possible, or one that is already formed and established; whether it be necessary or contingent; whether you ought to conceive it

frequent or rare, &c.

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VII. WHAT is called in the Schools, Ignoratio Elenchi, Fallacia phurimarum Interrogationum, Fallacia à dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter, & Sophisma Accidentis; all these erroneous Ways of Rea-

Sophisms arising from a Question ill stated.

foning have no Place, but from neglecting to establish a

right State of the Question.

When the Stoics said, One and the same Thing cannot be sometimes good, and sometimes evil (2); therefore Virtue is the only Good; this was a Sophism, concluding from what is absolutely true, to what is only true, with relation to Circumstances. One and the same Action cannot in itself be sometimes good, and sometimes bad, absolutely and necessarily; I allow it. But an Action may deserve these different Names, according to the diversity of Circumstances, because at certain Junctures an Action is laudable, that ought to be condemn'd in opposite Circumstances.

THEY

⁽z) Fieri enim non potest, ut una res modò mala sit, modò bona, modò levis, & perferenda, modò expavescenda, &c. Sen. Ep. XXXI.

THEY who take an Argument from the wrangling, conceited, fophistical Vein of young Academics to despite the Sciences, fall into the Sophism called Sophisma Accidentis. An ill Manner of studying does harm: therefore good Scholars will have no Advantage by studying under

good Masters (a).

THE Reasoning of Charren, (Book III. de la Sag. Chap. XIV. Sect. XIX.) by which he pretends to prove, that Knowledge and Wisdom do never meet, is precisely a Sophism. Under a Pretence, that Knowledge may be separate from Prudence, he is pleased to look upon them as incompatible, without attending either to the Nature of that Knowledge that has not been accompanied with Wisdom, nor to that of Prudence, which he thinks proper to

admire in Minds that are less knowing.

THE fairest and most flourishing States, Republics, Empires, antient and modern, have been, and are governed very wifely, in Peace and War, without any Science. Rome, for the first Five bundred Years, when it flourished in Virtue and Prowefs, was without Science; and us foon as it grew to be learned, it began to be corrupted, to be disturbed with Civil Wars, and fall to Ruin. The finest Government that ever was, the Lacedemonian, founded by Lycurgus, which produced the greatest Men, made no Profession of Learning; it was the School of Virtue and Wisdom: and it came to be victorious over Athens, the most learned City in the World, the School of all Sciences, the Seat of the Muses, the Magazine of Philosophers. Thus far for the Antients. The greatest and most flourishing State and Empire, now in the World, is that of the Grand Signior; who, like the Lyon of the whole Earth, makes himself formidable to all the Princes and Monarchs of the World: and in this State, there is no Profession of any Science, no School, no Permisfion to read, or teach in Public, no not their own Religion. What is it, that conducts and prospers this State? Wildom and Prudence. But let us come to those, where Learning and Science are in Credit. Who govern them? Not the Learned. In this Kingdom, for Instance, where Letters are more encouraged than in any Country, and that seems to have succeeded Athens; the principal Officers of the Crown, the Constable, the Marshals, the Admirals, and even the Secreta-

⁽a) Vitiosum est artem aut studium quodpiam vituperare, propter corum vitia, qui in co studio sunt, co. Ad Her. Lib. II.

Secretaries of State, that dispatch all Affairs, are ordina-

rily Persons entirely void of Letters.

WE must look for the Causes of the Disorders of the Roman Republic, in the Riches and Luxury that came into it, at the same Time, that the Sciences of the Greeks entered: And if the false Philosophy of the Pyrrhonians, and Epicureans had not favoured the Licentiousness, that was brought in by their great Riches, the Republic might have lasted much longer. The Athenians were not undone by the Sciences, but by their Factions; Envy and Ill-Will reigned among them, before the Sciences made any Progress. The Barbarity and Fierceness of the Turks might contribute to their Conquests, and serve to found their Empire; but Experience shews us, it is not proper to support it. The Great Men, who have had a Share in the Government of the happy Monarchy he speaks of had reason to congratulate themselves, that they did not spoil their Minds by the Whims of the Schools, to which they gave in those Times the Name of Knowledge.

of Philosophy, because it gives Men, say they, a Turn of Chicane, and an Aversion to Simplicity. They call that Philosophy, which is the contrary; the Simplicity of Proofs is a great Part of their Elegance, and the End of Philosophy is Tranquillity. Now it is evident, that the more you love it, the more you will abhor a Spirit of

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VIII. WHEN you propose a Question yourself, you may understand, or express it, as you please, and fix the Sense of it, as you think proper, keeping the Proofs close to that Sense. But when you read an Author on a Question, which you do not find clearly enough stated; and inquire, what Aids are requisite to understand it rightly: You

How you may find in an Author the true State of a Question.

are requifite to understand it rightly: You must observe that a judicious Author may sometimes not be very nice in the State of his Question; because, when he wrote it, it might be sufficiently clear: You must then look for the Rise of it, and the View of the Author in the History of that Time, and this will let you into the Truth you inquire after.

In modern Authors we find a thousand Strokes, that would be unintelligible, useless, and liable to a contrary Interpretation, did we not know a Variety of Circumstan-

ces, they allude to, that gave occasion to them.

In a rational Author, the Sense and Force of his Proofs will display the Question itself; for in a rational Mind the Proofs and Question exactly correspond with one another. The Conclusion and Consequences from it will often brighten the Question, when obscurely and narrowly proposed: For the Conclusion is only the Question proved; and the Consequences taken from that, are the Conclusion itself, presented to the Mind in its proper Light, Force, and Effects.

When you are otherwise certain, that an Author thinks justly, those Expressions that are dark, and liable to a wrong Sense, will the more easily be explained; it being more reasonable to conclude, there is an Embarrassment in his Language, than a Mistake in his Ideas. St. Peter infinuated, that we must explain some Places in St. Paul, by that Maxim, 2 Pet. iii. 26. And supposing that St. Augustin thought nothing but what was exactly true, in the Matter of Grace, the Archbishop of Cambray avers, That if he seemed to establish an offensive Doctrine, we must recur to a milder Sense, one that is more good-natured, and worthy of him. Lett. V. and in the Xth, The literal Sense must be qualified, and he must be supposed to be somewhat inflamed by an excessive Zeal, against the Pelagian Heresy.

The Advanmine well the Sense and Extent of a Quetages of this
Care.

IX. When you thus endeavour to determine well the Sense and Extent of a Quetages of this flion, and form a precise Idea of that, in which it consists, which is a necessary Condition to decide it well; you have the far-

ther Advantage to know the Importance of it. If it be of no Importance, Time will be too precious to be lost about it: If it be of Weight, in itself, or its Consequences, you will double your Attention to examine it. It likewise often happens, especially in Questions not very much compounded, that, after they are well determined, and the Definition is put in the Place of the Thing defined, they are immediately decided, without adding the Light of Proofs or Reasoning.

Rile of it, and the View of the Anghor in the History of that Time, and this will let you into the Train you in-

I've modern Authors we find a thoughnd Sirokes, that

ces, they adude to, that gare occasion to them.

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III EXPERTENCE CHE US US That the



new Light can in Hick , P. A. P. Dhat new Idea can clear it? When a Man, filled with this Defire, views a

How we ought to Search for Arguments.

of Vety man a Man othe, for Example, I. The N this Help, of which we have been speaking, which is The Definition one of the most useful we of an Argument. we must, as we said before,

look for fome Ideas to join with the Subject and Attribute; which by extending, or amplifying them, may clear the Relation that is between them. This third Idea, which must be discovered to form our Reafonings, is called a Medium, because it is placed, as a Tie, between the two others. It is likewife called an Argument; a Term used to fignify what illufirates, declares, and proves.

II. SUCH is the Nature of the Mind, as we have often remarked, that one Idea pro- The first Means duces others , or that a fecond Idea springs that facilitate up, and arifes, after, and on occasion of a the Discovery former. It is likewise an experimental of an Argu-Truth, that a fecond Idea has more on lefs ment. a Relation to a former, as we are more or lo 1000 bas

less attentive. My first Direction towards the finding out of an Argument, shall be therefore to compare with Attention the Idea of the Subject with that of the Attribute, and make them both prefent to me: For from this fixed Attention, which I give to the one and the other of these Ideas at the fame Time, a third will arife, that will have a Relation to both of them. It will not be hard thus to perceive two Ideas at once, when a Man has thus taken Care to make them familiar to him. It is here he must begin. The Attention which a Man will give to the Definition of each Term, will tend very much to make the Idea ofamiliar, end out, betovered, the best villes one Principles, on which the Resolution of the Ouelist de-

-sex Illihe more you make them familiar to you.

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Means.

III. EXPERIENCE tells us, that the Fruitfulness of the Mind is very much animated and raised by Questions. A Man therefore must ask himself, what he must

know to assure himself of the Relation there is between the Subject of his Question, and the Attribute? What new Light can instruct him in it? What new Idea can clear it? When a Man, filled with this Desire, views a Question, it is an effectual Means to produce within himfelf what will answer that Desire.

An Instance. IV. WHEN a Man asks, for Example, whether War ought to be made? the Question may turn upon the Profit, the Certainty of Success, or the Justice of some War in particular. But, when the Sense of the Question is determined to this; whether there be some Wars, which may be undertaken, without a Breach of Humanity, or violating what we owe to ourselves, or to other Men; or whether, on the contrary, what we owe to ourselves and others may in some Circumstances engage us in a War: To settle this Question, I first define the Terms, and putting the Definition in the Place of the Thing defined, it appears, that I demand, whether the Interest of humane Society may sometimes engage us in violent Methods, that tend to kill and to ruin those who disturb it.

To decide this Question, what must I know? Why, whether the Interest of Society can, on some Occasions, justify the taking Measures that may end in Blood; and how far Obligations of this Nature extend. When I attend to this, I readily answer, that the Interest of Society obliges Men to do what they can to keep the Peace and Order of it. What more? Why, I must ask, whether there be any Cases that require violent Methods to compass that End, and which cannot be attained but by forcible Ways, in repressing those that trouble it, either by resusing what is due to us, or invading our Rights. Putting these Cases, will establish an Argument, that will decide the Question.

Determinate Ideas furnish the best Arguments.

V. This Instance clears the Practice of the foregoing Rule, and yields two other Remarks at the same Time: One is, that a Question grows so much the more demonstratively clear, as your third Idea is more than other that this third Idea is the

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determinate. The other, that this third Idea is the more easily and justly discovered, the better you know the Principles, on which the Resolution of the Question depends, and the more you make them familiar to you. You

You must always begin with the Knowledge of these Principles; but if you have not enough studied the Matters, on which the Questions turn, it will be running too great a Hazard to undertake the Solution of it.

VI. It is needless to go from the Question we have pitched upon, in order to expose the pitiful Reasonings into which Men Reasonings.

want of deep and attentive Reflexion on the Nature of Man, and of Society, which is composed of Men, some may condemn all War, from a Dread of the Desolations of it; not thinking that humane Depravity may often be guilty of Excesses, that cannot be guarded against, but by bloody Methods; and that, as humane Affairs stand, a less Inconvenience must always be endured, to avoid a greater. Some, as ignorant of the Heart of Men, and of Society, think, that Men may live without Magistrates or War; because a few good-natured and well-bred Families may

for fome Time live in Agreement.

SOME know and diffinguish a just from an unjust War. and own there are Occasions obliging to make War, and others to refrain from it: They think it just to fight in Defence of our Country; and otherwise, to enter into the Service of foreign Princes. The former is good, fay they but to expose yourself for the Service of others, is barbarous. By this Distinction, they please some Women, who are grieved to part with their Lovers, their Husbands. or any that are dear to them; but glad to think, that if they were attacked, they should not want some to stand in Defence of them. This Distinction is afterwards repeated to their Disciples, and credulous or ignorant Friends; and being confirmed by feveral Approbations and Repetitions, they boldly inform the Public of it: Yet nothing is more frivolous; for, if the End be good, the Means absolutely necessary to come to it, are lawful. Now. how can a Country be detended, if it has no experienced Officers and Soldiers? and how shall it have them, if they must stay till their Country is at War, to train Men up for it? Befides, the Weaker would always be a Prev to the Stronger, were he not to be supported by the Aid ms, which are only of his Neighbours.

On the other hand, a War may be so palpably unjust, and cruel, that as Subjects cannot in Honour or Conscience serve in it, unless they own the Will of the Prince to be the supreme Law, and hold, that the Magistrate may dispense

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with the Command of living justly, as well as righteouth and godly in this present World. This shews the Danger of dwelling upon general Ideas, and the Necessity of going from Notion to Notion, till we come to some deter-

minate Light in a Question.

Some decide this by a Distinction of Wars into offenfive, which are unjust, fay they; and defensive, that are just. But as in War, Men do that by Force, which they profecute by Reason at the Bar; this is like faying, that in Suits at Law, the Plantiff is always in the wrong, and the Defendant (however he came to be in Possession) always in the right.

VII. THE Road, by which we arrive at How to facili- the Discovery of this Argument, this midtate the prece- dle Idea, that is necessary to form a Reafoning, is easy and short; but the Practice ding Rules.

is more difficult; and it is maftered only by Habit. A Man should begin to reason on the least compounded Subjects, studying with Care and Order, to get clear and exact Ideas of them. Young Men are happy, that have Masters, who instead of proposing only to their Understanding and Memory Things worthy to be known, form them to invent, to inquire, and fearch with them what they have already found, and what they, for a Moment, suppose to be obscure and uncertain. The Discovery of Truth is a kind of Chace, to which we are formed by this Exercise. When we meet with Authors that do not only discover Things to you, but the Way by which they discovered themselves; that appear to fearth and trace the Evidence of a Notion; we must put ourselves in their Place, and fearch along with them. These are the Books we ought to read often, and to make them perfectly familiar to us: And when we have gained a little more Strength, we may reflect very usefully on the Mistakes of others, and by going up to the Source of their Errors, establish better the State of Questions, supply what they have omitted, avoid their Windings and Evafions, and carry our Researches to an Exactness, and a determinate Evidence, which they have neglected.

VIII. THE Schools mention fome Sophisms, which are only Deviations from our The first Sophism against Rules about the finding out of an Argument. It often happens, that we prove a these Rules. Proposition by something that is not less

obscure. This is very much the Way of Preachers; the

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Text they explain, is, according to them, one that wants to be cleared, and all the parallel Texto are a manifest Commentary upon it. But this Text thus explained, will become, in some Weeks, a formal Exposition upon them, by whom it is pretended to be explained itself. When Men will reason upon obscure Matters, they are led by Impatience to find out something, to prove one Obscurity by Brute Animals are not Machines, nor yet do they reason: Some prove this, by saying, they are only guided by Instinct. Man seems free, but is not; an irrevocable Predestination has marked out the whole Train of his Thoughts and Motions. By fuch Reasoning as this, Men try to shake the Certainty of an inward Sentiment, taking for a Principle something that is incomprehensi-We see likewise Authors, that to examine the Nature of Bodies, take the contradictory Hypothesis of Tranfubstantiation.

IX. WHEN the Truth of a Proof we use supposes the Truth of a Proposition we would establish by that Proof, this is called phism.

in the Schools Petitio Principii. This would be a very childish Mistake on very simple Subjects, and, at the same time, so gross, that Men have been tempted to look upon the Rule that guards against it to be superfluous. But great Men have fallen into it in compound Matters. For Example, Why is Gravity taken for the Principle of the Acting of Bodies one upon another? It is as easy, and would be as clear to say, that they act one upon another, as to say, they gravitate one upon another.

The common Demonstration of the Principle of Mechanicks, among the Antients, is a Petitio Principii; and those, by which learned and famous Algebraists would prove, that a Fraction, multiplied by itself, will not produce an Integer; and that you can never find in Fractions the just square Root of a whole Number, when it has not an Integer for a square Root; these Demonstrations are not far from the same Default.

IT is urged, that the Knowledge of Rules is useless, because with this Knowledge many learned Men err from the Truth. If they pretend to prove by this Reasoning, the Infignificancy of Rules, it is a Sophism, that supposes what is in Question. They who have studied the Rules, as a good Logic directs, and will make use of them, depart less from the Truth, than they would do without

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them; and they do not really miss it, but for want of Care and Attention to the Method, which the Rules prescribe.

I F the Union of the Soul with the Body consists only in a simple Concommitancy of Thoughts and Motions, it is a Correspondence, rather than a Union; but the Soul is really united to the Body; therefore it must be something more. We suppose what is in question, when we suppose in this

Union more than we perceive.

THE State of a Thing is fixed, Motion is not fixed; therefore it is not the State of a Thing. If by a fixed State you mean a State without Succession, it is a Petitio Principii: If you mean a continued State, a Body in Motion continues to apply itself successively; its successive Manner of applying itself is not interrupted. Take what Portion of Time you please, between the End of that, and the Beginning of the following, there is no Interval; therefore the moving Body applies its Surface successively without Interruption.

When Spinosa said, there was but one Substance, because we have but one Idea of Substance; he takes for a Principle what is in question. We have only a general Idea of Substance; but we have many determinate Ideas of divers Substances, to which the same general Idea is

indifferently applied.

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THEY that scruple to own a Fault in the Authors they admire, justify Homer by Virgil, and Virgil by Homer; on which soever of the two the Objection falls, they take it for a Principle, that the other is a Guard to him.

THE Passions, that always turn our View from that which is not agreeable to them, that perplex a Question, and hinder the right stating (b) of it, are also Causes of supposing what is in question. A Man is too supine to pursue a certain Science, and to follow in all their Steps those that take more Pleasure in it than himself. What a Folly, says he, is it to waste a Life in searching after Things that are impenetrable? I agree with him in this: but what Advance has he made by it? I deny, that what is difficult, and disagreeable to his Taste, is, for that Reason, impenetrable: He sees it, and from one true Principle joined to another that is supposed, he draws this Consequence; that,

⁽b) See the Place of Seneca quoted in the preceding Chapter. S. V. Note 2.

PARTIII. the Art of THINKING. 211

that, as for himself, he is a wife Man, and others are

all Fools.

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MEN are not agreed about the true Sense of a Pasfage in Holy Scripture: Each pretends that his Interpretation is good, and accuses others, that will not admit it, of Want of Respect for the Holy Scripture. This Accufation would be just, if the Persons so accused allowed the Interpretation to be true, and yet reject it; when indeed the only Reason why they refuse it, is because they cannot fee that it is the true Interpretation. The Query is not, whether the right Sense ought to be received, but whether a certain Interpretation be the right Sense. They who pretend to be infallible, do confequently affirm, when they fay, that they have kept the Depositum of Faith unchanged, that it is needless to put them to Difficulties upon it, that cannot stagger their Belief: But they, who do not pretend to be infallible, are obliged to own, that among the True, the Good, and the Profitable, there may have fallen in a Mixture of fomething, that it would not be amiss to rectify.

THE Dispute of M. Huet with M. Despreaux upon a Passage of Longinus is well known to all Men of Letters. It was upon the Sublime of these Words, God said; let there be Light, and there was Light. M. Despreaux, after Longinus, admires the Sublime of the Expressions of Moses; M. Huet finds nothing in them, but an Instance of the native Simplicity of the Tongue in which he wrote. The Dispute growing warm, as it commonly happens, M. Despreaux did not think it became the Piety of a Bishop to contest the Sublime of the Scripture; M. Huet answered, Now it is easy to see, whether the Judgment of M. Despreaux be well grounded. He would draw Religion into the Quarrel, and make me guilty of Impiety, in denying that Moses employed the Sublime in this Passage. But this is without Proof; and he gives that for a Reason, which is the Point in question. If it be contrary to good Sense to say, that this Passage is sublime, as I think I have made it appear, it is ridiculous to say, that Religion is wounded by talking agreeably to good Sense.

This Dispute is an evident Proof, how easily Men of the first Rank in Learning may drop the State of a Question, in the Warmth of their Controversy. M. Despreaux alledges, that many judicious and pious Men cite this Passage of Longinus, as an Argument of the Divinity of Scripture. This shews, says he, how far Christians ought to be per-

Vol. II. P2 fuaded

fuaded of a Truth, so clear, that a Pagan himself perceived it by the single Light of Reason. As if the Sublime was

perceived by Faith.

THE Question rightly stated would, I think, have prevented all Contest. Are not the Ideas expressed here by Moses too great to present themselves to the Mind of Man? Doubtless, they are. Are not the Terms used by Moses proper to display them in all their Force? True: They answer the Greatness of the Ideas. Is there any Appearance, that Moses was elevated to these Expressions, meerly by the Greatness of his Genius; or, that the Tongue, in which he wrote, offered them naturally to him.

THE Reasonings of Seneca with Polybius, to comfort him for the Loss of his Brother, conceal a Petitio Principii, beneath great Words, and pompous Ideas. Polybius knew, that Life is chequered with Good and Evil; but he thought, all Things considered, the Goods of Life to be more numerous than the Evils; and that it was better to live, than not to live; and for this Reason he laments his Brother. Seneca, on the contrary, takes it for granted, that he who dies, gains more than he loses, and (c) would

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be believed upon his Word.

NOTHING is more frequent, in the ordinary Difcourses of Men, than this Petitio Principii. You are prejudiced with Hatred; a Man praises the Valour and Generofity of your Enemy: He has not, fay you, done what you afcribe to him; and why not? He is neither valiant nor generous. But he is proved to be both by his Actions. I do not believe it, reply you; and why not? &c. Then the Circle begins again. Prepossessions of Favour lead a Man to the fame Meanness of Think-One discovers a new Truth, or opposes an old Mistake. Were this true, (fays fome Person, of the first of these Propositions) the Antients would have spoken of it: Were your Objections folid, (fays another, of the fecond) the Antients would have been mistaken. And how do you know, that the Antients knew all, and were not mistaken? Oh, we have nothing like their Works, both in Extent and Solidity: But I tell you, that fuch and fuch Confiderations

⁽c) Si bene computes, plus illi remissum, quam ereptum est.
---- Miserum putas, quod ista amisir, an beatum, quod non
desiderat Sen. Cons. ad Polyb. cap. 28.

PART III. the Art of THINKING. 213

derations escaped them. You are deceived; they knew

every Thing, &c.

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THEREFORE we must never suppose that for true, which is unknown, and of which we have no Idea: This is a Rule we have already settled. There is no Certainty but in Evidence. A Reader opens a Book, with a Desire to inform himself of something that was obscure, and search the Causes of it; but he finds, the Author insists on the Favour of agreeing with him, and of supposing, with him, some Principles, which neither the one, nor the other comprehends: This is to disperse my Darkness indeed, on Condition, that I take Darkness for Light.

X. THE School Logicians add another
Rule, that forbids you to apply the Proofs A presented
drawn from one Science to another; and Rule is rejected.

they call the Breach of this Rule, Transi-

tio ad alivid genus, a passing from one Genus, or Kind, to another.

ITHINK this Rule was invented by some, that wanted it, to ease the Objections laid against their false Hypotheses. Thus one Doctor, who is for the System of Atoms, when pressed by the Arguments of a Mathematician, talks previshly, or ludicrously, as he is in Humour. Mind your Business, says he, and I will take Care of mine: Do you teach the Mathematics, I will teach Physic: Our Provinces are distinct; let us live peaceably one with another, each in his Territory: But these are Evasions; for, if the Mathematician speaks the Truth of Extension, the Division of it has no Bound, and therefore it does not consist of Atoms.

This Rule of Command is likewise very commodious to those that distinguish the State of a natural, from that of a sacramental Body: to support by this incomprehensible Distinction other Incomprehensibilities, which they boldly maintain, without knowing what they say: And, in general, when a Divine, giving a Loose to his Zeal for great Words and Subtilities, does not understand farther what he says, and finds Reason against him, he bids Adieu to Reason, sends it down to inferior Forms, and enjoins it not to be so audacious as to rise higher. (d)

ITHINK that fome Politicians could put this Rule to a rare Use; and treat a wise Instructor, that would con-

⁽d) Omnium vero bonarum artium, denique vir utum ipsarum societatem cognationemque non norunt. Cic. de Orat. Lib. III.

fine them to the Limits of Duty and Virtue, as a Fool, that knows no more of the Elements of Logic, than the Depths of Politics, and passes from one Genus to another.

MEN are first possessed of some Opinion, then they search for Reasons to support it; they allow all that seems to savour their Prejudices, and resuse the contrary. They equally take the Liberty of using the Principles of one Science for another, when they like them, and rejecting

the same, when they are not for their Purpose.

The fame Fault prevails in Morality and the Maxims of Conduct; Men submit to Laws that are commodious; and, in other Cases, every one forms for himself a particular Scheme of Morals. The Soldier takes a Freedom which he condemns in a Churchman. The Advocate chuses his Rules, and the Judge his own. And, as what is received for true in one Science, passes for false in another; one applauds himself for doing what he will not bear in another.

Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.

What exposes one to Punishment, raises another: He that is the greatest Cheat will punish a Servant for the least Breach of Trust. Men are prepossessed, and take for their Rule some temporal and mistaken Interests; and accordingly give the Name of Light to Darkness, and that of a

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false Lustre to the clearest Day (e).

I A M sensible, that one and the same Proposition may and ought to be received as true, or rejected as salse, in different Senses, or Respects. Thus this Proposition, A Point has no Parts, will be salse, if it means some Points, actually existing; but true, if it means such Parts as are not worth considering, Now, as different Sciences treat sometimes of one Object, considered in different Senses, it will happen, that the same Proposition may be affirmed with Reason in one, and denied in the other; if you can call that the same Proposition, which is composed of the same Words, but does not contain the same Sense. Thus Three are One, and Three are not One; but this is in different Senses; for, in the Sense in which three are more than one, in that Sense three are not precisely one.

⁽e) Quidam adeo in latebris refugerunt, ut putant in Turbido esse, quicquid in luce est. Sen. Ep. III.

PART III. the Art of THINKING.

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Length, Breadth, Depth, are not three Bodies; but three Realities of one Body; and yet this does not hinder their forming one Body.



CHAP. III.

Of Common Places.

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give Instructions different from ours, to affish us in the finding out of Arguments; I will represent, what

Every Argument is reduc'd to some Topic.

whether

a Man may think the most reasonable in their Method: They confidered, that an Argument could not clear a Question, but by Virtue of some Relation it had to the Subject or Attribute of it. This being laid down, they distributed all the Relations imaginable into certain Classes, and concluded, that every Argument ought to belong to one or another of them: This is a very true Conclusion; for there is no Argument without some Relation to the Question; and no Relation, that is not reducible to fome one Class of Places, in which you may fearch for Reasons; or, of Common Places: for indeed these Places were expressed by Titles common to several Arguments, and contained all the general Ideas, that are applicable to many determinate Subjects: So far we may agree to them. We have explained these common Places in the first Part, when we fpoke of the Relations which our Thoughts have one to another.

II. When they add, that an Argument, being presented to the Mind, in order to let The Usefulness us see, whether it relates to a Question, so as of Topics. sufficiently to clear and establish it in our Belief, it is good to call to mind the Rules of that Relation, to which this Argument belongs, and attend to the Force of the Relation (for all are not of equal Force) and the Conformity of the Argument to all the Rules of that Relation it belongs to, and in Virtue of which, they pretend it proves: If this he their Opinion; it is of Use, I approve of it. If I would prove any Truth by its Cause, I should examine,

whether the Characters of a true Cause are in that, which I alledge. If I would prove by an Example, I should re-consider, what the Force of Examples is: I should remember, that they really serve to clear a general Proposition, and facilitate the Understanding of it; because determinate Ideas strike the Mind, more than general Ideas; but Examples do not always prove.

ableness of common Places.

III. WHEN we are farther referred, for The Unservice- the Invention of Arguments on compound Questions, to consult these Common Places, one after another, and to fee whether we cannot draw fome Proof from the Like; the

Adjuncts, the Causes, or the Effects; I think that many Things may be faid against this Method.

IT cannot afford any great Affistance; for, if the Subject we are upon be but little known, it will not be so easy to know the Like to it, the Opposites, the Adjuncts, and the Causes; and if it be well enough known to lead the Mind to reflect, both eafily and justly on all these Relations, it will, doubtless, be sufficient to fix our Attention on this Subject, and from our Ideas, thus attentively confidered, we shall have a clear Knowledge of it, without the Necessity of distracting ourselves with Common Places. This Distraction itself will prove hurtful, (which is my fecond Remark) because it will divert Part of that Attention which should be entirely bestowed on the Subject we study. Besides, these Common Places only present general Ideas; and must we forfake the determinate Ideas of the Question, which may produce others, for such uncertain Ideas, as may be often ill applied? Let the Question be again about the Justice of War: By looking into the Common Places, viz. that of Causes, the Effect is unjust, if the Cause be unjust; and Pride and Revenge are the Causes of War. The same Common Place will tell us, that Defence against Injustice and Usurpation is a good Plea for War; thus, instead of Uncertainty from Ignorance, we are in doubt, by the Opposition of Arguments; and all this is from an equal Application of the general Idea of a Cause to two opposite Cases.

THEREFORE this Method is no Help to him, that has but an obscure Notion of the Matter of the Question. Let a Man make the Trial, or remember those that were made when he was a young Student, and he will own, that after having vainly confulted his Common Places one after another, a little Attention to the Question gradually

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the Art of THINKING. PART III.

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produced fuch Ideas in him, as he had looked for elfewhere to no Purpose. He that knows something of the Subject he would reason upon, needs not to consult these Common Places; and he that confults them, can only draw general and infufficient Proofs from them.

IV. TRUE it is, the antient Rhetoricians fought for no other: Provided they could in a short Time, without imparting any folid Knowledge to their Disciples, (fuch

Answer to an Objection from Custom.

indeed they wanted themselves) make them talk readily and largely on Subjects they gave them, they were content. Their Relations, and the thoughtless Multitude, were dazzled to hear them; and this was enough to bring a great Reputation, and all the Advantages of it, to their Maiters.

THE Art of finding Arguments to dispute upon a Subject that is little known, is deceitful, and only tends to spoil the Reason of a Man. After having acquired an unhappy Facility of finding out the Appearances of Reason, a Man cannot reconcile himself to take all the Precautions necelfary for the finding out folid Reasons, and to separate Certain from Probable ones; fo that when this Method does not ensnare a Man into Pyrrhonism, it is that by Chance, Fancy, or out of the Deference to the established Opinions, he checks himself in the midst of his Career.

I T is therefore of no Confequence to pretend to authorife this Method by antient Ulage: For Men do not know the Force of Custom; they do gravely in their Old Age, what they were taught to do foolishly in their Youth; and one Doctorfollows the Steps of another, as Geefe in a Line. But befides the greatest Masters have owned the Childishness of this Method; Cicero and Quintilian, who have treated of it in Complaifance to Custom, have been aware, that nothing could be more superficial. Quintilian advises us not to dwell upon it; and when Cicero speaks trankly and seriously of il-

lustrious Orators, he justly rises to other Maxims (f).

YET

(f) Existimo gratum te his esse, Crasse, facturum, si ista expolueris, quæ putas ad dicendum plus quam iplam artem polle prodeffe. Cic. de Orat. Lib. I.

Non omnia - mihi videntur ad artem & ad præcepta effe revocanda - Qui docent, cum causas in plura secuerunt, singulis generibus argumentorum copiam fuggerunt tamen ufus eft nottri à capite, quod velimus, arcessere, & unde omnia manant, videre .- Non extrinsecus aliunde quærenda, sed ex ipsis visceribus caufæ fumendæ funt. Lib. II. See more of this, Lib. III. e.

YET he himself was much accustomed to this Method: in a View of Honour, and ferving his Clients, he was obliged to take upon him all the Caufes that were recommended to him: One Refusal would have procured him too many irreconcileable Enemies, fince it would have been a Prejudice to their Cause. He likewise shone the brightest in the most equivocal Matters: Therefore he turned his whole Genius to find out and offer those Reasons that were the most feeble in themselves, in Colours the most proper to affect the Audience, upon every Subject, both for and against it. By this means his Eloquence became the most fermidable to some, and helpful to others. But his Habit of viewing all that could be faid for or against a Point at the same Time, and presenting both in the clearest Light, missed himself, and did not only in Theory tie him down to meer Probability, but made him always floating, irrefolute, uncertain about what Party he ought to take, always diffatisfied with that he had taken; and it was the Cause afterwards, that the last Years of his Life, as well as his Death, were unworthy of his high Station, his noble Sentiments, and beautiful Maxims, that shine in his Works. They will always be read with Admiration, but we shall ever be displeased to see that he who teaches them fo well, was fo wanting in the Practice of them.

An Examination of the Logical Ana-Tylis of the Schools.

V. THE Authority which this Method got by long Use, has made some Men of a low Genius imagine, and a vast number of Persons practise the most ridiculous Way in the World to understand an Author. If you will, fay they, penetrate to the Bottom of

their Thoughts, you must reduce each of their Terms to its Common Place. Let us fee a little, fays one of these profound Masters (to whom God has given the Key of the Sciences, and of the Understanding of Books) to a young Scholar, let us see a little, whether you comprehend what you have read. Then the Scholar, to shew his Parts, does not forget to fay, the first Word belongs to the Cause, the second to the Subject, the third to the Adjunct, the fourth to the Effect, the fifth to the Cause again, the fixth to the Opposition, the seventh to the Similitude: and yet, after having given this Satisfaction to his pretended Guide, he can neither explain what he has read, nor give you the Substance of it, nor discuss the Proofs, nor weigh the Force of them: And is this furprifing? He has been used to turn his View from the determinate Ideas, that make all II.

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the Force and Beauty of a Discourse, to lose himself in general Ideas. Let him put these pretended Explications in the room of the Terms explained, (this is the Touchstone and Character of a good Explication) and he will see a Light ridiculously disguised in Darkness. Some Commentators have been so infatuated, as to explain thus the Holy Scripture from one End to the other, by this impertinent Logic. This deserves our Pity; and it would be every whit as reasonable to print the whole History of Livy in Syllogisms.

He that knows the Things treated of by an Author, and the Meaning and Force of his Words, discovers, without other Aid, the Thoughts of that Author. But he that does not form a just Idea of him by these Means, often hazards a Mistake in recalling every Word to some of these Common Places. For how shall I be affured, that this Term implies the Cause, another the Adjunct, &c. if I do not comprehend the Discourse I read, and have not a sufficient Idea of the Thing it treats of? Therefore we must know all this before, to make the Logical Analysis; and so that Analysis does not give us that Knowledge.

Men will reduce the same to different Topicks. When our Lord tells the fews, that the Name God was given to Mortals, in order to remove the Offence they took at his making himself equal with God, one says, this Argument is drawn à simili, another, à minori. This Subject must be studied to decide which Analysis is the juster; it is not the Analysis that imparts this Knowledge, but it is this Knowledge that justifies the Analysis. Thus they who understand the Matter itself have no Occasion but to reduce them to some Common Places, for the better understanding of them; and they who are Strangers to the Matter, can fetch but very little Assistance from these Common Places, and are only led by them to very general, but nicely minc'd Notions.

To manage a Subject by Common Places is the Way to fall into Repetitions that are very useless and tiresome. In speaking of Injustice, I should say, that Avarice, Revenge, &c. are the efficient Causes of it; after that I should add, that to satisfy one's Passions is the final Cause of it: And what are these Passions? Why Avarice, Re-

venge, &c.

Greydamus composed a Book of Physics, that was Cartesian at the Bottom; but all disposed according to the Common Common Places of Ramus's Logic. In fo blind a Method you must have a great Attention to find that the Author was in the main a Man of Sense.

You may read in another Author the Colours explained,

according to this Method.

THE Gemus: This takes in the Qualities. On this Occasion he goes upon the Substance and the Accidents.

THE Difference: They differ by their Causes. This leads to a Circle; for, when you come to this Relation, you find he speaks of the efficient, material, and formal Cause; and the Qualities come round again with the Accidents.

WHEN he arrives at the Final Caufe, he fays, the Fi-

nal Cause of Colours is the Glory of G o D.

THIS is reasonably enough called the Method of Common Places: It may be applied to Darkness as well as Light; and in general to all that is not Colour, as well as to Colours.

THE most ridiculous Writings have been some Commentaries upon the Scripture, where you fee nothing but this Analysis of the Books, Chapters, and Verses, and each Word reduced to a Common Place. It is Pity we have not the History that Lucian speaks of, which was all written in Syllogisms; we might have bound it with these Works in one Volume.

the Helps which the Memory draws from them.

VI. THIS Analysis, and these Common Reflections on Places are pretended to be a Help to the Memory. The Topics are a Row of Niches, which by Use are become familiar, and are thought proper Places to lodge in what they have to fay; fo that there is no

Difficulty in tracing over again a Road that has been to often beaten. I own, the Memory has fome help from it; but to spare the Fatigue of the Memory, is it reasonable to load it with so many Confiderations that are useless, obscure, and commonly too general and whimsical? Reafon tells us, that in a Discourse we ought always to let that before, which will give a Light to what follows. Therefore we must begin with that Part of the Subject that is easiest to be known, whether Adjunct, Effect, or Cause, &c. so that to handle different Subjects, each in the clearest Order, you must vary the Order of the Topics, (g) and as foon as you vary it, the Memory will receive

⁽g) Scio à præceptis incipere omnes qui monere aliquem vohunt, & in præcepta definere; mutari hunc interim morem expedit :

but a flender Affistance from it; and fince that will not always hold, must not you vary your Discourses, in order to please, and to win Attention?

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BESIDES, what are you led to by this Method, but to general Notions, that are rather Excursions than Illufrations? It is certain, Men do not use it in the Compofition of Pieces, that turn upon Subjects of Importance. Neither the Masters of antient nor modern Eloquence were corrupted by this Method. In Dramatic Writings it is not followed. Lawyers would lose their Practice, and finish no Affair, did they recur to it in explaining of Wills, Laws, Contracts, or Decrees. So that a dry useless Form, abandoned by all the World, has taken Refuge in the Church. Whether it be for public Edification, I appeal to Experience; but I think, that some etymological Remarks upon each Word, some Distinctions, and synonymous Terms; then an Enlargement on two or more Common Places, after having fatigued the Hearer, leave him as ignorant of the Text, and the Truths that flow from it, and as little confirmed in the Practice of Virtue, as if he had been otherwife employed. In the Manner that fome Persons preach, and value themselves upon their Way of Preaching, one would think, that the good Effect of a Sermon on the Heart, should arise less from its Evidence and Force, than Respect for the Place where it is delivered, or the Person that speaks it.

VII. H E that will remember a Discourse, The Means to must at first, I think, propose an End to confirm the himself, and have it at Heart; and then fe-Memory. riously think on the Means to it. If the first that occur have need of Support from others, to these first must be joined others, and on occasion, more. He that cannot form and execute this Plan on the Matter he treats of, the Circumstances of Time, and the Dispositions of his Audience; ought to learn to think, before he undertakes to ipeak. But he that is fixed upon an End, and Means to it, will not forget the Chain of Things that lies in his:

Thoughts :

pedit : aliter enim cum alio agendum est, coc. Sen, de Conf. ad Marc. Cap. II.

Tantum est flumen gravissimorum optimorumque verborum ut mihi non solum tu incendere judicem, sed ipse ardere videaris. Cic. de Orat. Lib. II.

Quot homines, tot cause. Ibid.

Variare orationem magnopere oportebit, oc. De Invent. Lib.I.

Thoughts; and as to the Words, if he thinks justly, and has learnt to express himself properly, the same Thoughts that furnished him with convenient Terms, when he composed his Discourse, will offer themselves when he speaks it; both will come together, and the Ideas will always be followed by their Expressions, when a Man is accuflomed to think and speak justly: Ambiguous Expressions will not intrude, instead of those that are clear and exact. I look upon these Helps to be more useful to the Memory,

than the common Places of the Schools (b).

Do Men look upon a Detect of Memory as one of the greatest Reproaches to an Orator? He that stops short, is difgraced. It is much, that a Default in point of good Sense does not create an equal Prejudice against him. Reason alledged for this Difference is, that Defects of Memory are gross and notorious, but few perceive the other, and they who do perceive them, are not equally struck with them, as being accustomed to them. But I think the Want of Memory is not without good Reason a Prejudice to the Name of an Orator, and gives so ill an Idea of his Heart and Understanding.

WHEN a Man is bent, as he ought, upon the Love of Truth, and the Advantage of his Audience, he entertains them only upon Subjects of Consequence; he thinks upon

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Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur,

Hor. Art. Poet. v. 331.

And as one faid as Poetically in Profe, Cum res animum occupavere, verba ambiunt. Sen. Cont. I. 7. And another, Ipfa res verba rapiunt. Montagne, Book I. Chap. XXV.

Facile in rerum abundantia ad orationis ornamenta fine duce, natura ipsa, si modo exercitata sit, labetur. Cic. de Orat, Lib. 111.

⁽b) I have heard fome pretend, they cannot express themfelves; and yet they put on a Face, as if they were Men of Thought; but for want of Eloquence, they cannot produce it. This is a Sham. They have some dark unformed Conceptions, which they cannot clear within, nor therefore display without. They do not yet understand themselves; and were you to hear them stammering a little on the Point of being delivered, you would think it was not come to a Labour, but a Conception, with them; and that as yet they have only touched upon some imperfect Matter. For my Part, I think, and Socrates determines it, that he who has a clear and lively Imagination in his Mind will produce it, either in Expressions, or in Looks, if he be dumb.

them carefully; he forms exact Ideas of them, ranges them in the most proper Order to produce a good Effect; expresses them in the most suitable Terms; reviews his Difcourse often, and makes it very familiar to him. In the first place, he fills his own Heart with that which he would convey into the Hearts of others; and he does not forget what he is fo full of, and what he takes fo great an Interest in. It is a Shame to attempt what a Man is not capable of performing; to pretend to teach what he does not very clearly know; to affemble an Audience for a Subject he is little concerned about; to speak only to shew himself; and amass the Thoughts of another, to do himself the Honour of them. It is amazing that an Orator, who only speaks for Pay, can remember so many Words that fignify so little; or that one who is full of himself, does not more frequently forget his Subject. Therefore the Defects of Memory, in Orators, are very often the Effects of Ignorance, Idleness, Indolence, or Presumption.



CHAP. IV.

Of TESTIMONY.

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E have proved in the Second Part, that a Man is not de-The Necessity ceived while he judges no of Testimony. farther than he fees; but is

in danger of mistaking, when he supposes what he has not feen. Yet on some Occafions we cannot fee the Truth of certain Things, neither

with the Eyes of the Body, nor with those of the Mind; because some are too distant from the Time in which we live, or the Place where we are, and others lie out of the Reach of our Understanding. Thus we have not seen the Truth of antient Facts, reported in History, any more than that of modern Facts, which we read in the News. Neither have we Penetration enough to fee, in our Ideas, the Certainty of fome Truths taught us by Revelation. And in humane Arts and Sciences, do not Workmen, confiding in the Skill and Honesty of some Mathematicians,

whom they esteem, undertake some Works upon Rules the Demonstration whereof is unknown to them, but they must of consequence understand the Meaning, tho' they do not fee the Truth of them? Therefore we may fometimes. without Mistake, suppose what we have not seen; and there are feveral Occasions when we may not see a Thing, and which, by Consequence, it is necessary to suppose. Yet in fuppofing, I may be too credulous, and be ridiculed for my Pains. Since then I may suppose falfely as well as truly, are there no Rules for Certainty in it? We have laid down a Method to discover Arguments that will give us a Sight of Things; let us now establish Maxims for Suppoling, without fear of Error, what we have not feen.

II. WHEN any Persons advance a Pro-The first Rule. position, before I take it on their Word for true, I should, as in all other Cases, first examine the Sense of them. I must then form an Idea of it, and understand what the Words mean, separately and jointly; for to Believe is an Act of the Mind that implies to think, to have Ideas. I may have fo good an Opinion of a Man as to believe him, tho' I do not understand what he fays; vet then, tho' I believe he fays nothing but what is true, yet I do not believe the Truth which he pronounces; for that is not the Object of my Belief, while I have no Idea of it; then, I fay, I neither believe, nor reject it; it has no Relation to my Thought, but that of being entirely obscure.

III. WHEN we understand the Words of

The fecond

a Proposition, if they feem to form a con-Rule. tradictory Sense, or rather, form no Sense at all; because of their Opposition; if the Ideas they express feem to be incompatible, it is impossible to acquiesce in such a Proposition. He that does not think on it attentively, may find himself in a Humour to agree with it, and fay, that these Words contain a Truth; but such an Assent is impossible to an inquistive Mind. He that speaks a Contradiction, speaks an Impossibility; and how can a Man persuade himself, that he believes that to be possible, which he believes to be impossible? If an Authority, which I own to be entituled to all the Homage of my Understanding and Will, should assure me of fuch a Proposition, and command me to believe it, I should be far from suspecting that it was deceived, or intended to deceive me. But while it offered me a Contradiction, I should think I did not know the true Sense of it,

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and that my Ideas of it were not the true Ideas. Thus the Obligation I should own, not to reject it, should influence me to fearch after a Sense of it, that would be possible, intelligible, and so real, and capable of being affented to.

I T may eafily happen, that a Man may find the Sense of an ill-understood Passage contrary to Reason, or the true Sense of a Passage, opposite to some bad Reasoning. But he must examine both the Passage, and the Reasoning by fuch Rules as are well established, and be very careful in deciding upon a Subject, whose Principles are not diflinctly enough known. But if he carries the Question farther, and asks what he must do, if Religion and Reason should be really opposite to one another; this is a Proposition that has no Sense: It is like putting a Question, what Side a Man should take, were Gon to offer him Propositions destructive to each other; this would be the Case, should Reason contradict Religion. It would be less absurd to deliberate, what Place to take to, if Heaven should fall.

WHEN a Man asks, whether it be possible to believe a Contradiction? to answer this Question according to our Rules, we must first observe, that the Word believe is an equivocal Term, to which Custom has annexed more

Senses than one, tho' few apprehend it.

A M A N fays, he believes what he does not politively reject as false: Thus many believe the Religion of their Country. They do not suspect it to be false, and yet are ready, without knowing it, to quit it on the flightest Rea-

fon; so it be tayoured by some Interest or Passion.

SOMETIMES to believe is to presume that a Propofition is true, and be inclined to admit it. Thus we believe that our Friends, our Relations, our Superiors, at least if we be in their good Graces, have more Merit than other Men, to whom we are not fo related. We have no Proof of it, but we do ourselves the Pleasure to believe it; and these Presumptions are more or less durable, according to our Humour or Interests. hemielves the

To believe, is likewise to yield to some Proof; and these Proofs to which we yield often, borrow their Force from Prejudice or Interest. We acquiesce in them without the least Examination, or Knowledge of the Force, and

often of the Terms of them.

THEREFORE it is possible that we may believe contradictory Propositions; that is, it will not come into our Heads to reject them as faile. We may depend on thole that recommend them; and number the Proofs for them, instead

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instead of balancing them. Add to this, that every contradictory Proposition has two Senses, which destroy one another. When we try to bring those two Senses together. to fee them both at one fingle View, and admit them for true at the same time, we cannot do it; for it is not possible to do that which is impossible. But we survey one Sense of such a Proposition, and pass by the other; we form an Idea of that, and admit it for true. A Moment after we abstract the other, give some Attention to it,

and embrace that likewise in its Turn.

PETER, James, and John, are three Persons, yet we cannot say there are three humane Natures; there is but one. So the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three Divine Persons, yet there is but one GOD. There was a Time, when Men expressed themselves in this Manner; and we cannot doubt, but at that Time many People mistook these Expressions, and so believed an Unity and a Plurality of Go D s. When they figured to themselves the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, like Peter, James, and John, they gave into Polytheism. Afterwards, if you asked them, whether there was but one GoD? they forgot what they faid before, and answered seriously, there was but one. But if a Man disturbed them about it, and asked them to be confistent with themselves; it was a Perplexity they would not come into. They easily agreed to make these two Questions one after another, but scrupled to think of them both at the same Time.

THE Stoics were sensible of the Beauty of Virtue, and the Horrour of Vice, like Men perfuaded of Liberty. The Motions that are in our Power was the only Good they allowed themselves to make the Object of their Desires. Yet they acknowledged a Destiny, and expressed themfelves about the Necessity, and Chain of Events, in the ftrongest Terms. One of these Hypotheses destroyed the other. They were equally attached to both, but they faved themselves the Trouble of finding out the Contra-

diction of them, by avoiding the Parallel.

Daphini

WHENEVER we are mistaken, we tall into a Contradiction with ourselves; and when we admit an Error, we receive for true a Proposition that contradicts the Rules and Principles of Truth, which we are perfuaded of; and we do not recover from our Mistake, till we bring it near enough to the Principle that is against it, to discover that we must necessarily renounce the one or the other.

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IV. WHEN we discourse of Facts, the Possibility of a Proposition does not warrant The third us to believe it true: Therefore when we Rule. cannot distinguish the Truth of it by itself, unless we will reject or admit it without knowing why, we must suspend our Judgment, or Belief, till we be convinced by evident Reasons, that he who assures us of it, assures us of no more than what he knows.

V. THESE Reasons turn upon the Sincerity and Skill of the Attester. The Union of these two Characters forms what we call dence in Faith. the Authority of Testimony, and the Foun-

dation of Fatth; which therefore has a double Evidence:
1. A Knowledge of the Sense of a Proposition:
2. The Skill and Sincerity of the Witness, thoroughly informed of the Matter he attests. By the former I do not mean, a Comprehension of the whole Extent of the Things it contains.

THEY who affect to oppose Faith to Reason, do not confider well what they do. If the Point be to reclaim a Man from Infidelity and Libertinism; when a Pagan is to be rescued from Idolatry, they have recourse to Reason, and if they will hearken to it, they carry their Point. But, as if they were afraid that Libertines will not believe they speak fincerely, and give them a sure Light, they foon throw that afide, and prefer Nonfense to it. They talk to them of a lightfome Obscurity; they recommend a Faith to them, whose Darkness enlightens, while the Light of Reason blinds and seduces them. When therefore they come to oppose Christianity to that Reason, by which they have exposed to them the Absurdity of Idolatry, they lead them to conclude, that the Christian and Pagan Religion are equally remote from Reason, and they let in Atheism into the Place of Idolatry. Thus by condemning Reason, they open a Gate to Irreligion, that cannot eafily be shut again. Men who seldom reason, such are the supine, and they that give themselves up to their Pastions, are fond to hear others declaim against Reason: So that under Pretence of raising the Excellence of Faith upon the Ruins of Reason, they overturn it. Charron makes ule of the Imperfection of our Reason to prove that nothing is more reasonable than to be always

in Suspense. How often, says he, have we Lib. II. de la varied, and been mistaken in our Thoughts? Sag. Chap. II.

of all the most eminent and wisest Men: The best and Vol. II. Q 2 greatest

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greatest Part of them professed to be ignorant and doubtful; affirming, that nothing was more certain than Uncertainty; that Men may reason equally on all Things ---The dogmatical and positive Race of Men, are descended of a pedantic and presumptuous Spirit, arrogantly bate and condemn this Rule of Wisdom, and are more fond of a Person of their own positive Temper, tho' contrary to their Side, than one that is modest and peaceable, who doubts, and suspends his Judgment; that is, they like a

Fool better than a wife Man.

DOEs he fee the Tendency of this? And indeed, who cannot but see it? But, not to displease an Order of Men. whose Anger might be formidable, he foftens them by speaking after their own Manner, and giving them a Copy of his Countenance. This, fays he, does not affect the Divine Truths, which the Eternal Wildom has revealed to us: which we must receive with all Humility and Submission, and believe and adore entirely; nor likewise the outward and common Actions of Life, the Observance of Laws, Customs, and ordinary Usages; for it is the Will of GOD we should not know, but only use them. For in all these Things we must conform to the prevailing Methods, without breaking in upon, or removing them. These we must account for to others, but all our Thoughts, Opinions, Judgments are free, and our own: That is, in Religion, as in Fashions, without the useless Trouble of knowing what is good or bad, we must only follow what we find to be established, especially if it be dangerous to swerve from it.

Montagne is of the fame Principle, Book II. Chap. XII. he fnears at the Christians under an Appearance of praising them. It is to Christians an Occasion of believing, if they do not find a Thing to be credible: It is so much the more agreeable to Reason, as it is against humane Reason: Were it according to Reason, it would be no Miracle; and were it conformable to some Instance, it would be no longer singular. To display the Triumph of Faith over Reason, he diverts himself with a little poor Sophistry, that has been a hundred times baffled. Prudence, fays he, which is a Choice between Good and Evil, cannot be in GOD, who is affected by no Evil. How can Reason and Understanding, which we use to arrive at Light thro' Obscurity, belong to him, since nothing is obscure to GOD? This was intended to persuade us, that the Name of Go D was the Name of a Being absolutely inconceivable; as if we could form no Idea of a perfect Being, unless by representing

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ing his Perfections entirely like ours, which are always allayed with some Imperfections. Does he pretend, that these Reasons are unanswerable; that the Understanding of Men cannot demonstrate the Weakness of them; and that all the Answer of Faith to them is its Obstinacy against their Evidence? An Atheist would not demand more, and a Divine would be thought to do Wonders, and make a noble Defence of the Faith, in allowing thus to an Atheist all he demands.

AFTER having been accustomed to despise Reason, in Points of Opinion, we soon undervalue it in Morals; we disfigure the several Virtues; we substitute our Whimsies and Superstitions in the Place of them; and we impose Silence upon Reason, in saying, that the obscure Light of Faith exalts us to Virtues, of a superior Rank to those, which the evident Light of good Sense recommends.

As foon as a Man values himself upon filencing his Reason, and placing instead of it what he thinks proper, under the venerable Name of Faith, there is no Extravagance (i), which he will not endeavour to establish: It is

Q3 the

⁽i) Faith fays indeed, what the Senfes do not fay, but never the contrary. Faith, Reason, and the Senses have their sepame Objects, and their Certainty in that Extent. And as God has been pleased to make Use of the Senses to give Entrance to faith, Faith is to far from destroying the Certainty of our Senses, that it would be destroyed itself, by calling in Question the faithful Report of them. This Rule is fo fure, and fo general, that when the Scripture offers two Meanings to us, whereof one, that is literal, is contrary to that, which the Senies and Reason own with Certainty, we must not pretend to diswow them, in order to submit them to this apparent Sense of Scripture; but we must interpret the Scripture, so as to find a Meaning in it, that is agreeable to the Truth of the Senles; because the Word of God, being infallible in the Things themselves, and the Report of the Senses, acting within their own Sphere, being also certain, the Truth of both must be reconciled; and as the Scripture may be interpreted indifferently, when the Report of the Senses is single, we ought, in these Matters, to take that for the true Sense of Scripture, which is agreeable to the faithful Report of the Senses. If you take a different Method, it would not tend to make the Scripture venerable, but expose it to the Contempt of Infidels, and debar their entering into the Church, for Matters of Fact are only taken in by the Senses. Paschal. Lett. Prov.

then a Dishonour to the sacred Name of Faith, to understand purely by it, a Facility to believe any Thing without Examination. This is to make Faith to consist in brutal Stupidity.

What is the Weight of humane Autho-

rity in Matters

of Reasoning.

VI. THEY that affirm any Proposition, are either Men who have no Affistance but from natural Light, or such as are instructed and inspired by God himself. In compound Subjects, which are hard to be known, and which the Understanding alone can discover

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by a regular and attentive Examination, we cannot entirely confide in the Ability or Knowledge of any Men whatever. All that have passed for such Men in the World have not agreed; fome of them have been fometimes mistaken. A Man of Sense, however modest, knows, and is opinionated of himself, at least, in some Degree, and often flatters himself a little; so that the Confidence he has in his Ability, hinders him at that Time from taking all the necessary Precautions not to be mistaken: And it often happens to Men of Letters, fatigued with Bufiness, that they yield to a Conclusion, more from Weariness than Knowledge. How then can I tell, whether this or that Proposition be not unluckily one of these? Or, to use the Proverb, that the great Homer has not nodded a little? Examination only can affure me of it; till I fee a Thing myfelf, my Knowledge is no more than probable; and this Probability comes the nearer to Certainty, as I have the greater Number of Proofs, that the Person, I rely upon, is a Man of Ability.

WHEN I am uncertain, if an Author has perfectly fucceeded in all his Writings that are extant, the greater Name he has gained in the World, the more I ought to distrust his Authority, to enable myself to perceive the Force of his Proofs, or search for them, if he has alledged

none,

Bur dare you pretend to know better than a Author so much admired? This is not impossible. Evidence convinces me; I see distinctly; I attend with great Application to what he viewed cursorily, and imagined that he saw. The Discovery of a Truth is sometimes the Effect of a lucky Hit. I cannot tell how it is, but we may be in a Point of View, where another had not the good Fortune to be placed; and when several Men search after a small Object they have lost, it may happen, that one among

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them, who has the dullest Sight, may find it. This is a Remark of J. F. Gronovius (k).

THERE are frequent Occasions in Life, when we are forced to determine ourselves; yet we are not always able to chuse the best Side of a Question. In this Case it is proper to refer ourselves to the Authority of those, we have some Reason to believe the most capable; since we must be content with the Probable, when the Certain is wanting. Thus when we are ill, we consult the Physicians, and pitch on the most esteemed; thus we advise with an Advocate in Law, and a Divine in a Case of Conscience; and in general, believe any Man in his Business, when we have Occasion for him, and cannot judge ourselves.

What can an Idiot do better, in Cases where he must chuse a Side, and is not able to examine, than to follow the Authority that appears most weighty? If his Guide deceives him, his Error being invincible, or very little his Fault, would it be imputed to him by a merciful Judge, that knows the Infirmities of human Nature?

IN a Word, we must daily take up with Probability, and determine, without being perfectly sure. Our Duty and Life every Moment is regulated by it. I do good, tho' I know not but it may be abused. We sow, we trade, we make War, we marry, &c. Life would be unactive, did we undertake nothing, without Assurance of Success (1).

But to be altogether certain, that a Man is not miflaken, when he advances a Proposition, whose Truth he had not discovered, but by a long Chain of Reasonings; it is absolutely necessary we ourselves should examine into those on which he relied, and which have led him to this Discovery. Therefore, we are not perfectly sure of the Truth of a Theorem, that is an Object of Reasoning, till we are convinced by our own proper Examination.

Q4 VII. But

⁽k) Nescio quomodo in his otium studiis Fortuna quædam dominatur, & summis interdum ingeniis ardua facit, quæ longè minoribus obsequentia & facilia comparat. Cic. Tusc. Quest.

⁽¹⁾ Conscendens navem sapiens num comprehensum animo habet atque perceptum se ex sententia navigaturum? Ibid.

Respondebimus nunquam expectare nos certissimam rerum comprehensionem; quoniam in arduo est veri exploratio; sed ea ire qua ducit similitudo, &c. Sen. de Ben. Lib. IV. Cap. XXXIII.

Of Facts that is past, and cannot become any more the arecomplicated Object of our Examination, how shall we and obscure. be affured, that a Man who reports it in the Ouality of a Witness, is not mistaken, has

not omitted some effential Circumstances, and taken several Appearances for Realities? When the Fact is not entirely fimple, and a Man therefore may not have observed it nearly and exactly enough, we should give more or less Credit to the Report, as it appears the Attester has seen it better, and taken more exactly the necessary Precautions not to be mistaken. Thus it is not enough for a Mathematician to fay, that he has observed such a Phoenomenon, in order to his being believed; he must declare the Circumstances, the Time and Place; what Instruments he used, and in what Manner. For Want of this Examination of Circumstances, after a Man has imposed upon himself, he imposes upon his Reader, and attributes to a certain Cause an Effect that is owing to another very different one. A fincere Man might, for Instance, have related, what Father Dechales tells us, as an Eye-Witnels; That he faw at Befançon, in the Air, at Noon-day, a Form of a Man bigger than ordinary, with a Sword in his Hand, that feemed to threaten the Town; but if he had not added, as that judicious and honest Reporter did, that he perceived this Spectre to be only the Reflexion of the Statue of a Saint, that was placed upon the Steeple, one might have thought, that the Clouds took the Shape of a Man by an accidental Rencounter; or, another might make a Miracle of it. A Man has made a happy Use of a Remedy; this is divulged; but because he does not tell us all the Circumstances of it, others ascribe to it an Effect, partly owing to his Constitution, or the Preparations he took before: Nothing is more frequent, than these imperfect Narrations,

IT is reasonable to give Credit to what is affirmed of a Phænomenon, when I find the Author has taken all the Precaution to avoid Mistakes, as I would have done in

the like Cafe.

VIII. WHEN Facts are fimple, or circumstantiated enough to conclude, that the Facts.

Witnesses of them could not be mistaken, without being distracted, or visionary, or interactions, and we find they were not Fools, or careless in relation to what they say, all we have to do, is to be convinced of their Sincerity.

IX. The

IX. THE Probity of a Man, who in all Respects keeps up the Character of Wisdom, Proofs of Sin-Temperance, Moderation, and Disinterestedness; this Probity is a very strong Proof of

Sincerity. To lie, has fomething in it so mean, that a Heart, which has any Relish for Virtue, can never be reconciled to it; and if upon any Occasion a good Man may forget himself, tho' he may for once deviate from the Truth, yet he will never persist in it, or design to make it public or perpetual (m): Yet, since some are Hypocrites, and even a good Man may sometimes let go his Integrity, some other Proofs must be given to make his Sintegrity, some other Proofs must be given to make his Sintegrity.

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We should therefore examine, whether the Witnesses, upon whose Deposition the whole Matter turns, were free from Prejudices, and capable of examining the Fact in all its Circumstances; if those Interests they give up for it are such, as are most prevailing with the Heart of Man, the Proof will be still more convincing. We should weigh all they are exposed to, Poverty, Contempt, Disappointment, Distress, Stripes, Punishment: And to prevent every Doubt, or Evasion, we should compare their Sufferings with their Recompence; for the Proof of Sincerity is the more demonstrative, the more a Man's Reward, for afferting a Fact, is reduced to the single Satisfaction of doing his Duty (n).

Another Proof arises from the Perseverance of Witnesses, without contradicting themselves, in suffering for what they say; as they persist longer in it, as they might more easily and certainly foresee the ill Consequences, and so more readily remove them by a Recantation; or change them to a Recompence of good Success, Esteem, and Affection.

THE Multitude of Witnesses also fortifies the Authority of their Testimony. One that professes himself virtuous, and is careful to answer that Profession, and yet would

⁽m) Boni nullo emolumento impelluntur in fraudem, improbi sæpè parvo. Cic. pro Milone.

⁽n) Sic vita hominum est, ut ad maleficium nemo conetur sine spe atque emolumento accedere. Cic. Oras. pro Sex. Ruse.

Quis enim unquam conatus est jura omnia & consuetudinem omnium commutare, cum vituperatione sine quastu? Act. V. in Verrem.

would take all his Pleafure in supporting a Falshood, notwithstanding all Interest against it, would be a Prodigy, and out of humane Nature: Now Prodigies feldom happen. When many plot to deceive, it will be very hard for them to fucceed: In the Moment that one among twenty betrays the Cheat, all the Credit of the other nine-

teen will fall to the Ground.

THIS leads to a Proof from the Success of a Testimony: But to make this a Proof, they who have received it as true, must not be found to have been disposed to believe it by any Prejudices, or to make a Shew of believing it by any Interests; but that, on the contrary, when follicited by powerful Interests to reject it, they could not be inclined to receive it, without examining the Truth of it; and it is likewise necessary, that this their Examination should give a ready Occasion to conclude, that they were not mistaken in the making of it.

THIS Proof is not at all weakened by the Number of those that do not believe it, or profess not to do so. He knows little of Mankind, that Supposes the Majority of them to be more sensible of Truth, than of their temporal Concerns: Many will not fo much as inform themselves of a Truth, that does not serve their Pleasures, or their Fortune; and most Men, tho' it presents itself, will turn their Eyes from it, if it be incommodious to

them.

WHEN all these Proofs concur, an attentive Man must believe them, as certainly as if he faw the Facts, provided the Witnesses be furnished with these Characters. The Thing is not indeed fo striking, but a Man can no more doubt of it. He, who has all possible Reason to believe, and does not believe, is without Excuse for his Infidelity, because he will not make Use of his Reason.

X. THE Proofs of the History of the The Certainty Old and New Testament, only require an Application of the most simple of these Prinof History. ciples of common Sense. As to the Truth of other Histories, we may distinguish the main Part of the Facts from the Circumstances: The former we cannot refuse to believe, without a Stiffness, that savours of Fol-That the Son of Philip, called Alexander, and King of Macedon, having made himself Master of Greece, subdued the Persians; That Rome, after a Government of feven Kings fuccessively, was then governed by Confuls, di-

vided

vided into Factions, conquered a great Part of the World. and, at last, fell under the Tyranny of Cæfar. Some indeed may doubt of Facts of this Nature; for among Men there are Fools of all Kinds; and some, for love of Wrangling and Singularity, may contest them; but no reasonable Men will ever doubt of them. When Facts are very public, attested by many contemporary Historians, or those that copied them, and connected one with another, they have a Character of Truth, with which Reason is very well fatisfied; but it is not the fame, as to the Certainty of Circumstances. We know by what Principles Men govern themselves; and these often give us Authority to doubt of the Truth of Circumstances, and to apprehend they are romantic: He that reports them may retrench, may add, may vary, may embellish them, according to his Interests. How can we be affured, that an Historian has been exact in every Thing, that Prejudice never imposed upon him, and that he wrote only from the Memory of fincere and difinterested Persons; for, fince a Man is not present at every Thing, he must needs write from the Memory of others.

THEREFORE we may have an Affurance from Hiflory of notorious Facts, of what is agreed upon by two Parties, of original Pieces, and Circumstances not contested. But, in other Particulars, we cannot rise above Probability; and, to be free from Error, we must read them as Men of Sense do the public News; not to know a sure Detail of what has been done, but of what is said in seve-

ral Places (0).

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XI. THIS

It has happened, or it has not happened; this is always a Turn of humane Capacity, of which I am usefully warned by this Account, Book I. Chap. XX.

⁽⁰⁾ Asinius Pollio found some Mistakes in the very Histories of Casar; arising from this, that he had not looked into all Parts of his Army, and had believed some Persons in relation to Facts that were not made good, or was not sufficiently informed, by his Lieutenants, of Affairs, which they had managed in his Absence. By this we may see, that we cannot confide in the Account of a Battel, upon the Knowledge of him, that commanded in it (supposing this Inquiry after the Truth be exact) nor take the Reality of what passed near them, from the Soldiers, unless we confront the Witnesses, after the Manner of a judicial Information. Mont. Book II. Ch. X.

XI. THIS Uncertainty does not destroy Its Advan- the great Advantages we draw from History: It is the Study of the Nature of Men; for Men paint themselves by their Discourses

as well as by their Actions: If it does not exactly tell us, how Things have passed, we see in it, how they might be transacted, and, by this means, History becomes ever

a School of Prudence and Reflection.

XII. I r often happens, that different Au-Characters of thors report the fame Fact in a different the best du- Manner; then we prefer those that are the thors. best informed, as Contemporaries, to those that are not; fuch of them, as had a Share

in Affairs, or were Eye-Witnesses to others. Tho' they shew us at Rome the Font where Constantine was baptized by Pope Sylvester II. yet we may reasonably doubt of it; because Eusebius, a contemporary Author, attests, that he was baptized at Nicomedia, in the 30th Year of his Reign, and a little before his Death.

WE judge likewise of the Ability of an Author, by the Reputation he has acquired, by the Vein of clear and exact Thinking, that prevails in his Work, by the Order of his Details and Circumstances, by the Judgment he shews in his Reflections; whether he praises, or condemns; by his Silence upon Trifles, or improbable Facts,

which others take Care to describe.

AFTER this Comparison of their Ability, we likewise compare their Sincerity; and upon a controverted Fact we distrust, with good Reason, an Author, who reports others, manifestly fabulous; who colours over, and out of a Spirit of Party, difguifes the Facts, and omits the Circumstances, or alters them; excuses what ought to be condemned, and makes an Apology for Vice; and takes from virtuous Actions their Value and Merit; by the unreasonable Motives, little known, and as little fure, to which he affects to impute them.

WHEN an Historian is inconfistent with himself, we have a Right to distrust him; we suspect either his Sincerity, or that he is too credulous. Philostratus wrote the History of Apollonius; he speaks of him, as a Man, whose whole Life was a Series of Miracles; but at the fame Time complains, that he had been buried in Oblivion; and this no more than an Hundred Years after his Death. How can we believe, that so many Prodigies, favourable to the reigning Religion, had been fo foon for-

gotten?

In doubting of the Ability and Sincerity of different contemporary Authors, or fuch as are very near the Times, whose History they write: (For sometimes an Author, who has lived fomething later, deferves the more Credit on that very Account; because then he may speak of his own Time with greater Freedom than before; and the Memory of Facts, of no antient Date, is yet public). History is sometimes made clearer, by the Agreement or Difagreement of contemporary Authors, and those that followed them, provided it be not at too great a Distance: For these last Authors know little of the Character of the first, and their Testimony has more or less Weight, according to the Characters they have themselves, of Penetration of Mind, and Uprightness of Heart.

Some, who have feen the Authority of an Historian. supported by that of following Authors, instead of examining the Weight of that Conformity, or inquiring whether they followed them nearer or farther off, have imagined, that, in order to prove, they need only string their Quotations, and alledge, in a ridiculous and promiscuous Manner, on a disputed Fact, Authors, who are many Ages distant, with as much Assurance, as if they lived within the Space of half an Age. We have Examples of this Fault, in the Disputes of the Learned, about the History,

or Fable, of Pope Joan.

XIII. THERE are some real Testimo- The Testimony nies; Monuments that verify, tho' they do of Things. not speak: These Witnesses are heard in their proper Cause; or rather, we draw demonstrative

Proofs from them.

XIV. NEGATIVE Testimonies have Negative Tealso their Force. Some affirm, that a Fact stimonies. is supposed, and that certain Customs were not in certain Places; and they prove this by the Silence of contemporary Authors about them. But then, to give Force to this Proof, they should have had an Occasion to speak of these doubtful Facts. If they could not be Strangers to them, and it was their Duty to mention them, the Proof is stronger; and the Testimony is more than negative, when they speak in a Manner not conformable to these Facts and Customs.

GREGORY of Tours is the first that mentioned the Martyrdom of the Thebean Legion. Would no Writer

have spoken of so glaring a Fact from Maximian (under whom it happened) to Gregory, which included the Space

of three Ages?

HELIODORE lived under Theodofius the Great, and Nicephorus, an Author of the Fourth Age, is the first, that tells us, Heliodore rather chose to renounce his Bi-Shopric, than condemn his Romance. So strange a Madness should have been related sooner.

THE antient Doctors of the Church had frequent Opportunities of appealing to the Pope, in their Disputes among themselves, and against Hereticks: They did not take that Method: This short Way therefore was not known in the first Ages, any more than the Foundation of

it, the Infallibility of a humane Tribunal.

In general, we may conclude a Principle is not effential to Religion, when you do not find it in the Works of the antient Doctors of the Church. An effential Article returns too often, to be no where found in their Writings. Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, do not speak of the acrostic Verses of the Sybils. Arnobius is the first that talks of the Combat of Simon Magus; we find no Trace of it in all that we have of the three first Ages.

THE fame is to be charged on the Crown of Thorns, fent by Baldwin to St. Lewis: Six Ages passed without

any Mention of it.

THINK OF DINOT!

We look on a Book as spurious, when it contains Things that were never known, or Terms unused at the Time, when it is pretended to be written. According to this Rule, we must reject as supposititious, the Works, in which the Words, Liturgy, Consubstantial, Mother of GOD, are attributed to an Age, that did not know



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CHAP. V.

Of the Application of Arguments.



FTER a Discovery of the middle Idea, we must apply it to the Subject and the Attribute of the Question, and compare it with each of them: This is the third Head of the Rules we give upon Reasoning.

I. Our first Precaution must

be, to apply this third Idea to one Term of Rule. the Question, in the same Sense and Respect, as to the other; and not to conceive an Union between these two Terms, any farther than they are connected with the middle Idea, that shews their Relation, by that which it has to them: For Reasoning is enlarging the Idea of a Subject imperfectly known, by an Addition, in which the Attribute of the Question is sound. This Idea then, which contains the Attribute, must be precisely the same with that which enlarges the Subject: In negative Propositions, the Exclusion of the second Idea has the Place of the Attribute.

II. We grossly deviate from this Rule, The first Deviby equivocal Terms, when two different ation from this Things bearing the same Name, we connect this Name in one of its Senses with

the Subject, and in the other, with the Attribute. The Instances of this Fault having nothing in them but Puerility and Impertinence, which have no Place, where a Man would even trifle politely: No Person can be deceived by them.

THE old Teachers of Logic in the Schools exercised young Students in many boyish Examples, to form them to a Distinction of equivocal Words.

A Rat gnaws a Cheese; A Rat is a Syllable; Therefore a Syllable gnaws a Cheese.

What you have, you have not loft; You have not loft Horns: Therefore you have Horns.

THIS Foolery has commonly one of these bad Effects; either it brings on a Contempt of the Rules, which would justly be reckoned useless, if they could be employed no farther; or they accustom young Men to be pleased with Toys, and entirely lose all Taste of Solidity (p).

III. Bur we do not perceive the equivo-The second cal Term fo eafily, when we compare a cer-Deviation. tain Part of an Idea with the first Term of

a Question, and another Part with the fe-Two Parts form two different Ideas, and the middle Idea ought precisely to be the same, in the two Applications that are made of it. A Man would fall into this Error, if he pretended to prove, that Extension is capable of Thought, because Man, who is a Body, feels Sensations every Moment; for Man thinks and perceives, because one of the Parts that compose him is not corporeal. Some reason thus: If Ideas are true, their Objects resemble them; Ideas are not corporeal, therefore their Objects are not Bodies. Such Men would write upon Paper, to prove there is no Paper. The Word resemble here is equivocal, and it ought only to mean, that the Idea makes the Object known to us. Were there no Body at all, it would be always true, that our Ideas would still represent Bodies to us, and those Objects that had no Being, would not in every Sense refemble their Ideas. Now an Idea cannot reprefent what cannot be. The Existence of Bodies then is possible, and by Confequence, there may be Objects that in every Sense, and in all Respects, may not be like the Ideas by which we know them. Are the Creatures divine, because GoD has the Idea of them, because the Ideas of Creatures are in him, and in him are true Ideas?

I r is still easier to be mistaken, when the same Part, and the same Property is considered in different Respects, and under different Faces. As Men govern themselves

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⁽p) Comminuitur generosa indoles in istas argutias conjecta & debilitatur. Ambiguitate verbi quæritur locus fraudi, quod faciendum non est ubi veritas non est in verbis.

PARTIII. the Art of THINKING. 2.

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more by Passion than Reason, the Reasons by which Men pretend to justify their Conduct, partake frequently of this Fault. How many despise the Sciences, from some Unpoliteness, or some Strokes of Ill-Humour, which they observe in certain learned Men. Their Reasonings would be just, if we ought to be averse to all that might produce an ill Effect on a Subject ill disposed; or that might be abused by the Caprice of Men. They value not the right Use of a Thing, how excellent soever, when they consider the Abuses of it. All they observe in a learned Man is not the Effect of Science. That looked upon in its Use, and in its Abuse, forms two middle Ideas, not one single Idea.

IV. THE most frequent Illusion, arising from a Neglect of applying the same Ideas The third in the whole Course of Reasoning, is that Deviation. of varying the Extent of the Terms. They

connect the middle Idea with the Subject and Attribute in a limited Sense, and afterwards in one that is more general. In the Question about perpetual Uncertainty, many Things are hard and doubtful; but some extend it to all without Exception: This is overstraining, and indeed a

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Thus the Word Friend is equivocal; for from those low Friendships grounded on Interest and mutual Amusement, there are many more Steps to that perfect Friendship which is the Admiration of the Philosophers: Hence those beaten Phrases, There are no such Things as Friends, There are few Friends, are both equally true and false,

according to the Extent of the Expression. 2001 201100114 013

In this Sense all the Terms of a Comparison are equivocal; the more and the less are not exactly determined; and this imposes the easier on you, as you meet at once with absolute Terms, that ought to be only taken comparatively. It is good, says Montagne, to be born in a very depraved Age; for in Compa-Book II. Ch. rison of another, you are virtuous. A Par-XVII. ricide, and sacrilegious Person, in our Days is a Man of Goodness and Honour.

Nunc si depositum non inficietur amicus; Si reddat veterem cum tota ærugine follem, Prodigiosa sides, & Thuscis digna libellis, Quæque coronata lustrari debeat agna.

Juven. Sat. XIII. 60.

Vol. II.

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MONTAGNE has reason to say, that Things are not so painful, or difficult in themselves, but from our Weakness and Cowardice. But when he said a little before, Fortune does us neither Good nor Harm; it only offers us the Matter, and the Seed of either; our Soul, more powerful than she, turns and applies it as she pleases, who is the only Cause and Mistress of our Happiness or Misery: Of a Proposition which is true in one Sense, he finds Means to

make it false, in giving it too great an Extent.

We re we obliged (fays a certain Author) to purchase Wisdom at the Cost of the painful Efforts of Reason, we should have no Cause to boast of it, for this proves it foreign to us. This is equivocal; I have it not without acquiring it; it is not mine, unless I purchase it. But the Principles of Wisdom are within me; Reason, the Power of acting and persevering in my Resolutions, notwithstanding the Toil I undergo for it, all this is natural to me: I find it within me, as I find I have Hands and Eyes. It is with Wisdom, as with all the Arts; with Politeness, the Knowledge of the World, Fortune, and all to which we apply ourselves.

THE Argument drawn from the Figure of the Parts of Snow, and the Hardness of Frost, to prove that Cold is something more than Rest, or the Absence of Motion, puts more in the Conclusion, than there is in the Premisses. The Figure of the Parts contributes to Cold; it is one of its Causes, therefore its Essence does not consist in the Diminution of Motion. In this Way of Reasoning, the immediate is consounded with the mediate Cause; there are Figures less proper for Motion; and it is by their impeding it, that they are productive of Cold. A right State of the Question would leave no Room for this Ob-

jection: One Fault betrays us into a second.

When lofty Words carry us to surprising Conclusions, that have an Appearance of Truth, the Equivocal slips in, and we do not perceive the Sophism. Sickness is the natural State of Man; therefore we must love it, and be afraid to be cured. This Reasoning charms a melancholy Man, that aspires to the Glory of the most refined Devotion. Sickness is an irregular, and Health a regular State of Nature: One leaves the Mind in its Freedom and Force; the other oppresses it, weakens and ob-

fcures its Ideas.

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THE same Quantity of Motion subsists; this Motion has divided Matter into Parcels; therefore this Division cannot go farther, and these Parcels cannot be smaller; for, in order to this, the Motion must be greater. This is equivocal; the same Quantity remains; it does not vary in the gross, and in general; but in particular, and in its Effects, it varies.

EQUIVOCAL Terms do not deceive us, but on Subjects we do not understand, or are prejudiced about. For Instance, a Man must be extremely prejudiced and dull to agree to this fine Reasoning: Youth ought to be very serious: True, it is an Age of Pleasures, but it is of ce-

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Descartes would prove as much Reality in Rest as in Motion; by saying, that a Body at Rest comes nearer to, or goes farther from that which is in Motion; instead of the moving Bodies approaching or removing from that which is at Rest, &c. This is equivocal: The Body at Rest does not itself come nearer, tho by the Motion of

the other it becomes nearer.

A M A N may cast himself headlong from the Top of a Tower, without being determined by any Disquiet, by any Weariness of Life, or Trouble of Mind, merely by making Use of his Liberty, and the Power he has over himself. If he will, he may, say some. This Faculty cannot be contested to belong to him. This is equivocal, and a Sophism in Reasoning. 1. Man is not a simple Being, and what is true of one Part of Man, may be false, if applied to the other. The Body may obey fuch an Order of the Will, and if it receives it, may put it in Execution. I own such a Faculty in Man: But the Soul has not a Power to determine itself to such a Defire, if not betrayed into it by some Disturbance: If it will, it may; True: But that it can will it, without Trouble of Mind, I deny. What is true of the Will, determined by some Trouble, cannot be rightly applied to it, when free, and determined only by Judgment, or its own pure Choice. What is true of the Soul in a certain State, is not true of it in an oppolite State. Therefore we confound in this Reasoning, the different Parts of Man, and the same in different States.

SENECA shakes off the Fear of Death by an equivocal Argument; Mors nec malum, nec bonum est, &c. Death, says he, is XIX.

neither a Good nor an Evil; for Good and
Evil turn upon something; but Death reduces us to No-Vol. II. R 2 thing. thing. Your Son is freed from all Dependance; he enjoys an Eternal Peace. There is a positive Evil that consists in Thinking disagreeably; and a negative Evil, which is only the Absence of some Good. If Lite is a Good, Death, its Negative, the Absence of a Good, is a negative Evil. The Gratitude we owe to the Author of Life, and our Obligation to make a good Use of it, is sounded upon this Principle. To perceive that we are freed from all uneasy Dependance, is to enjoy a prosound Peace; but an Impossibility of feeling either Good or Evil, does not merit any Name that carries with it an Idea of Felicity.

THE Reasonings of Montagne are almost always equivocal. Book II. Chap. XII. he defines Speech, as he pleafes; and after a very general, and therefore a very imperfect Definition, he concludes, that Man is not by this diffinguished from other Creatures, but as each of them has its Tongue, and its proper Idiom. They who aim at setting Man free from all Obligation, in order to think themselves in full Right to live only according to their Fancy, fink him as low as they can to the Rank of Brutes, who observe no other Laws. As for Speaking, fays he, it is certain, that if it be not natural, it is not necessary; I always thought that an Infant, if bred up in a solitary Place, far from all Society (which would be a difficult Attempt) would have some kind of Speech to express its Conceptions; and it is not credible, that Nature has denied us this Talent, which it has given to many other Creatures: For what is it else but Speaking, this Faculty of theirs which we perceive, of Complaining, Rejoycing, calling for Afficance, Courting, &c. as they do, by the Use of their Voices? How should they not speak to one another? They certainly speak to us, and we to them. How many Ways do not we speak to our Dogs, and they answer us?

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THE Sounds of Brutes are Expressions of their Sensations; but Men express their Ideas, their Principles, their Consequences. If we imagine any Thing like this in Beasts, we imagine it, because we will do so; we allow

it them without Foundation.

When a narrow little Soul is passionately bent upon any Thing, Words the most grossly equivocal are sufficient to impose upon it. The Public Money should be more facred than that of any Particular; because in doing an Injury to it, you wrong a great Number of Persons, whose Money it is. Yet there are Men, who allow themselves the Liberty to seize upon it, and appropriate it, as much as they

they can, to themselves. It is the Public Money; every Man has a Right to it, and it becomes the Prey of the first Occupant. Perhaps all this Reasoning is not made Use of: They are pleased to look upon the Public Money as here represented; and viewing it with that Eye, to appropriate it to themselves; I judge thus charitably of them; and if they, who seize upon it, do not in this Manner delude themselves, they are still more wicked, than I conceive them to be.

GRATITUDE is an amiable Virtue; it would be Rudeness to refuse any Expressions of it: Must you therefore suffer many to ruin themselves, to testify their Acknowledgments for Favours, which Humanity, Equity, and many other Reasons, demanded to be granted them

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What is called in the Schools, Passing from a divided to a compounded Sense, or the contrary, is an equivocal Error in Reasoning. No particular Person is Master of the public Revenues. This is the divided Sense: This is true, if you consider each apart: Therefore all the Persons that make up a Community have no Right to dispose of these Revenues. This is the compounded Sense; and, in this Conclusion, we speak of Particulars united, as in the Principle we speak of them separated.

A SENATE is Sovereign; therefore every Senator is also Sovereign, at least, in Part: This is passing from a compounded to a divided Sense. The Senators separated and assembled, do not present the same Idea. Therefore

there is an Equivocation in the Terms.

ST. PAUL attributes four Uses to the Scripture, (2 Tim. iii. 16.) This is enough for the Preachers to seek for these four Uses in every Verse, and in each Word of it.

EVERY Line has two Extremities; therefore two Lines have four: If you join them, End to End, and make but one Line of the two, you will have no more than two Extremities; therefore two are lost and annihilated. But how can that be, since, when you separate the great Line into the two that compose it, you find again the two Extremities? The Perplexity of this Reasoning turns upon the equivocal Word, Extremity. If by it be meant a very small Part, which is taken for its End, that little Part, that little Substance is not lost: But if it means a certain Relation, or certain Part, considered as the Last, or End, that Relation ceases, when you add another to it, and revives when you take off what you added.

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WHEN you draw too general a Conclusion from a Principle, that does not lead to that Universality, you change the Ideas; you carry those of the Conclusion farther than those of the Principle; therefore there is an Equivocation in the Terms, and their Sense is not entirely the same. It is the Pressure of the Air, that keeps up the Mercury in the Barometer; therefore when the Air is very cloudy, the Mercury will rife. Experience contradicts this Consequence, and yet seems to establish the Principle; but Experience does not tell us, whether the Elevation of the Mercury should be, in general, ascribed to a Pressure caused by the Fluid which we breath; and the Consequence fupposes this Pressure to be the Effect of watry Vapours distributed in the Air. From the general Idea formed on the first Experiments, we pass to such determinate Ideas, as have not yet been verified by them.

METAPHORICAL Terms do easily make Room for Equivocals: We may take them in a literal, or a figurative Sense; and the figurative may be more or less

comprehensive,

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MEN of the best Sense may be surprized by equivocal Terms, when Passion has never so little discomposed that Tranquillity of Mind, with which it is necessary to examine Things well. It had been observed, That as Tragedy represents the great and extraordinary Actions of Kings or Heroes, those Actions have Greatness enough in themfelves to strike and to astonish the Spectator: But Comedy, whose End is to make People laugh, ought to pre-Sent ridiculous Characters in livelier Colours than those in which we commonly see them; and should be like Pictures, feen at a Distance, where the Figures are larger than the Life. To this a famous Author opposes, That Vitruvius no where tells us, that the Theatre where Comedies were played, was farther from the Pit, than the Tragic Theatre. We are less affected by a Narrative, than by what we fee; and by Representations, than we are by real Facts, of which we are Eye-Witneffes, Whatever is only possible, is, with respect to what we actually see, the fame, that Objects viewed at a Distance, are in comparison of those we view nearer at Hand: So that, if we would have an Image and a Fiction not fail to produce a great Effect, it is necessary, that the Greatness of the Object should make up what it loses, by not being viewed near.

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Philosophers was given to those that had at Heart the The Original of this Word. those that had at Heart the

Study of Wisdom, good Sense, and Virtue. But those who affected Knowledge and Philosophy out of Avarice and Vanity, were

called Sophists: The lengthening, or curtailing of Names being of old, as well as at present, Marks of Contempt, and a Penalty upon Impertinence. As the false Sages were called Sophifts, to talle Reasonings had the Name The Word Paralogism is sotter, but implies of Sophilms. the fame Thing: It is a Reasoning, that comes near the Truth, but, instead of reaching it, turns aside from it.

II. WHEN a Conclusion is tounded upon Principles apparently false; this is called Two Kinds of downright a false Reasoning; as a Sophism Sophisms.

or Paralogism is what appears to be upon true Principles, but they are not so in every Sense, or not rightly ranged to draw a just Conclusion from them. Now, as some Arguments persuade by way of Evidence, and others by Authority, there are Sophisms of both Kinds. Some feduce us to imagine we fee what we do not discover by real Evidence; these are Sophisms that make us perceive amiss: Others engage us to yield to a mistaken Authority; and they make us suppose amiss.

WE fall into the Sophisms of the former Kind, when we transgress the Rules, by which we begun this Third Part, reduced to three Heads; and into the Second, by acquiescing in the Word of another, upon other Principles, than those we have established in the Vth Chapter.

SOMETIMES a Man has Sense enough to perceive, that a Reasoning is sophistical, tho' he has not the Skill to discover the equivocal Terms of it: And tho' he knows not how to answer it, yet he is not affected by it: Such were the over-strained Subtilities of the Stoicks (q), when they said, for Instance, that it was all one to live but a single Day, as to live many Ages. Virtue is the sovereign Good: To the supreme Good, nothing can be added; for it would not be supreme, could it receive an Addition: When therefore a Man is perfectly happy, during one Hour, he is come to supreme Felicity; there is nothing beyond it; and ten thousand Years of Life cannot make him more happy.

Those of Au. Ease, and so loves to give up itself to the Assurance of others; these last Sophisms, that dispense with the Trouble of Thinking, are the most frequent and dangerous.

We love to cleave to that, which we have found established from our Infancy; that, which is for our Advantage to maintain, and which we cannot oppose without Langer. By this Means, we love to follow the Opinions of our Superiors; we adopt their Principles, Maxims, and Conclusions. A Man is much inclined to believe, as his Pleasure and Interest lead him. It is agreeable to him to think, that what leads to Favour and Fortune is true, and the contrary false. He turns his Attention from that which is troublesome, and readily gives in to the Agreeable. We have already opposed these llusions, in our First Part; these deceitful Effects of our Passions; and we have explained the Means to prevent them. To see the Ridiculousness of them, you need only form a Reasoning, where the Principle, on which the Heart rests, is expressly declared. Macarius is richer (r), therefore he reasons better. One is noble, another obscurely born, who

(r) We must consider the Sermon, and the Preacher apart.

Mont. Book II. Chap. XXXI.

⁽q) Pungunt tanquam aculeis, interrogatiunculis angustis : quibus etiam qui assentiunt nihil commutantur animo, & iidem abeant, qui venerant.

The Gravity, the Robe, and Fortune of the Speaker, often gives a Credit to vain and empty Propositions. We must not presume, that Mr. — who is so followed, and so respected, has not uncommon Abilities; and that one so entrusted, and preferred, so disdainful, and haughty, is not more able than this other Fellow, that bows to him at a Distance, and is preferred by no body. Not only the Words, but the very Grimaces

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who, if they do not agree, the Poor without must be mi-Primulus is at the Head of an Assembly; therefore he speaks like an Oracle, and has more Learning, and Sense than any body else: His Rank is a Proof of the Beauty of his Genius; and when you fee him the first Man, you cannot, without a Defiance to common Sense, disown that his Notions are the justest, and his Expressions the most exact. What a Depth of Knowledge! What Purity of Language! What Nobleness of Style! What Height of Merit! He has all that comes up to his Rank, unless you will fay, that his Modesty and Politeness exceed them. And after such a Proof, may not a Man be allowed to add boldly, Quod erat demonstrandum? The Title is a Proof of Merit and Fortune, that deals out Preferment, confers at the fame Time a Capacity to equal it: Therefore Men are qualified, in proportion to their None are so foolish, as to affent to these Reafonings, but many determine, without Reafoning, upon these Principles. If a Divine pretends to suspect his Superiors of Heterodoxy, he will be laughed at; but if one that goes first, charges his Brethren with it, if he talks gravely, they believe him upon his Word: Therefore all that pleases us is apt to impose upon us, by the Authority with which it invests the Speaker: Not only Birth, Riches, Rank, and Power, but Eloquence, Gesture, the Sound of the Voice, the Air, the Manner, dispose the Heart to Submit readily to the Decisions of an Author

maces of fuch People, are confidered, and turn to account: Every Man endeavours to give a fair and folid Construction of them. Book III. Chap. VIII.

There is nothing to which Men are commonly more liable, than to give Way to their Opinions: Where the ordinary Means fail us, we add to them Command, Fire, and Sword. It is a Misfortune to live, where the best Standard of the Truth is the Multitude of Believers, in a Croud, where Fools so far outnumber the Wise. Quasi vero quidquam sit tam valde, quam nilsapere vulgare. Cic. de Divin. Lib. II. Sanitatis patrocinium est insanientium turba. D. Aug. de Civ. Lib. VI. It is hard to teep up our Judgment against common Opinions. The first Persuasion taken from the Subject itself, lays hold upon simple Man; from them it spreads to the Knowing, under the Authority of the Number and Antiquity of the Testimonies. As so me, in what I do not believe One, I do not believe an Hunded; and I do not judge of Opinions by Years. Chap. XI.

who has the Art to please. It was very wittily said of one. that out of a lazy Aversion to examine, we adopt the Opinions of another, as heedlesly, as the Mob swallow down the Pills of a Mountebank. It is only talking boldly, and few

Heads can refift the Impression.

THE more Authority a Man has acquired by his Talents, the greater Right we have to demand his Reasons; for the more knowing he is, he can the more eafily inform us: What has advanced him to his present Condition? Was it a blind Submission to those that went before him, or a constant Application to distinguish what is evident from what is uncertain?

IV. MEN love to case themselves of the Especially Pain of examining; so that they not only when Aver- adopt the Sentiments of those, in favour of from is the Mo- whom they are prepoffelled; but farther, they reject all that is established by those, against whom they are prejudiced, often without

any other Reason, or Motive, but that very Prepossession. As most Men are at the Bottom extremely malicious, and fo hate more strongly than they love, it is the furest Way to make them reject an Opinion, to inflame them against the Authors or Defenders of it. When we hate a Man, we love to condemn him; and the Pleasure we tafte in believing he is miltaken, engages us to yield to the flightest Proofs, that oppose his Sentiments. A Man naturally takes Pleafure in censuring others: This critical Temper passes for Penetration and Greatness of Mind, especially when levelled at Men in Authority.

IT is good for young People, as not blinded by the Interests of Parties, and the impetuous Zeal that attends them, to reflect attentively on the Folly and Injustice of those Prejudices, by Means of which Parties are formed; and after they have been formed, are exasperated against one another: Thus they will in Time get an Habit of despifing those low Methods, unworthy of all that love the Truth; and duly fenfible of its Force, know very well, that it wants no other Support, but the Liberty of producing it felf plain and undifguifed. We will run over the most ordinary of these faulty Motives, and the most trequent Sophisms, that seduce the Mind, from that Malice with which the Heart abounds.

FIRST, Men are apt to publish the real Defaults of those they would render odious; and in this they commit a double Fault; for first, from a true Principle, they craw a

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ridiculous, and often a false Consequence. A Man is vain or covetous, or voluptuous: Therefore he is mistaken in an Opinion, that has no Relation to his ruling Passion. This Reasoning is absurd: To give it any Force, it ought to be proved, that every Degree of our speculative Knowledge is always proportioned to the Degree of our Virtue (s). Besides, we are not allowed to be so free with the Faults of others. A vicious Man indeed ought to be despised for his Vices; but it does not belong to every Man to judge others, and inflict Punishments. A Murderer deferves Death, but every Man has not a Right to execute him. Punishment, and the Manner of it, is regulated by the Interest of Society, which is better served by a mutual Forbearance among the particular Members of it, fince all abound with Faults, than that they should be always employed in punishing one another.

THERE is only one Case, where the Interest of Society feems to require the exposing of a Man's Vices, and that all who know them should be careful to inform others about them: which is, when a Man abuses his Authority and the Reputation of Wisdom and Integrity, to infnare others into his Opinions: Every Man, in fuch a Cafe, has a Right to take away fuch Weapons from him, which he abuses to impose on others: But let a Man have what Faults he pleases, so long as he only supports his Opinion by Reafons, we must oppose him only by Reason (t). The clearest Arguments will be embraced by all Lovers of Truth. As for others, who judge at random, or through Passion, they are not worthy of our Notice; their Vote does no Honour to the Truth; if they embrace it, it is by Chance, which might as eafily have thrown them into Error; for we cannot be faid to honour Truth farther, than we really love it as fuch.

MEN piously decry the Style and Virtues of Heretics, lest in esteeming their Persons, we should also admire their Books. But are Sophisms the only Way to teach Men to se-

parate

⁽s) Quapropter stultitia nobis visa est, aut à benè inventis alicujus recedere, si quo in vitio ejus offenderemur, aut ad vitia quoque ejus accedere, cujus aliquo bono precepto duceremur, &c., Cic. de Invent. Lib. II.

⁽t) In Conventu hominum - nemo adest, quin acutius visia in dicente, quam recta viderit. De Orat. Lib. I.

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parate the Good from the Evil? Must we entirely decry the Patriarchs, for fear of imitating their Imperfections?

ARIUS had a large Stock of Pride within, concealed under an exterior Modesty. And how do we know his Pride? Can we fee into the Infide of Man, and know it

immediately?

THE same Malice and Spirit of Party, that animates some Men to publish the Faults of those, who are not of their Opinion, moves them likewise to heighten those Faults; fo that when one Man fays an ill Thing of another, he that would not be imposed on, ought to take

all in a favourable Senfe.

WHEN Men cannot find a Fault in an Adversary, they often make one: But to give Credit and Foundation to it, they disfigure fuch Actions and Expressions, as are in themselves most innocent, by malicious Interpretations and Inuendo's: Nay, they carry the malicious Craft farther still; to tear an Adversary in Pieces more furely, they put on a Cloak of Charity; and tho' they study to conceal their Spleen, yet it discovers itself, as it were against What they imagined themselves, they give their Wills. out as a public Report; to which, fay they, they give no Credit; but they well know, that Malice will believe every Surmise. After having supported what they advance by probable Arguments, which they put in the Mouth of others, they reject it with feebler Reasons (u). I hope by thus laying open the Cheat, I have, in some measure, blunted the Edge of its Authority.

V. ONE of the most ordinary Faults, which we impute to those we do not like, to make Of Prejudice against Novelthem odious and fuspected to the World, is a great Fondness of Novelty. When a Man is so bold, or, if you will, so audacious, as

to offer some new Conjecture, or propose some new Opinion

⁽u) Our Judgments are still indisposed, and follow the Depravity of our Manners. I find the greatest Part of the Wits in my Time very ingenious in obscuring the Glory of antient Actions, that are brave and generous, putting some vile Interpretation upon them, and finding out vain Causes and Occasions of them. This is great Subtilty, Give me the clearest and most excellent Action, and I can probably contrive five hundred vicious Intentions for it. God knows, to whom he will impute them; what a Variety of Images passes before our inward Will and Intention. Mont. Book I. Chap. XXXVI.

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nion to the Confideration of the Public, prefently they, who cannot leave the beaten Road to which they are mechanically inured, exclaim against him as fond of Novelties; and that it is a Shame to fuffer that Fickleness and Licence in new molding of the Sciences, which well governed States do not fuffer in their Dreffes: That the Love of Novelty is destructive to the State, and to Religion; that Disputes arifing from new Opinions perplex a weak Brain, and leaves it in a State of Doubting; that they may eafily create Schisms in the Church, and Divisions in the State: that Innovators, in short, are refractory to the Laws: which have regulated what is to be taught, and the Manner of Teaching it. But will a Man of Reason and Conscience pretend, that in order to keep the People in Submission, and hinder them from dividing in Matters of Religion, we should turn them from Study, and allow them to lead licentious Lives? Therefore we must pro-

ceed to a good End only by good Means.

To these specious Reasons, dictated by the Folly of some narrow Minds, too proud at the same Time to learn any Thing beyond the little they already know, or to retract what they have once advanced; I answer, that God, who knows the Bottom of the Heart, only knows with Certainty, whether it be a mad Fondness for Novelty, that imposes upon a Man, or the Love of Truth, that guides him. Men would fill have lived in an entire Ignorance, had they always liftened to the Freaks of old Dotards, against those, who have enriched Mankind with some new Truth. It a Man dares to say, it is now Time to fet Bounds to our Knowledge, he must have made no Reflection on the little we already know, or what remains to be discovered, or the daily Discoveries that are made: For never was Liberty more necessary, than at a Time, when the Minds of Men are determined to carry on their Pursuits of Knowledge. Is there a Man, who, after having read the Antients, will maintain, that he is ignorant of nothing? Had no Truth escaped our Predecessors, should not we have Contequences to draw from those Truths; and would it not become us every Moment to apply them to new Circumstances (x)? Lot if beresimmentes emission for the stances

9.To fice Country, got Honour by that Discovery,

In is the Fate of new Things to be contradicted; but

⁽x) Multum adhuc restat operis, multumque restabit, &c.

To flut out any Thing that is new, a Man must first demonftrate, that the received Systems are complete, and contain all that is to be known, without a Mixture of Error.

THE Proposal of a new Opinion, attended with Reafons, that support it, and are proper to persuade, will never produce Sedition in the State, nor Troubles in the Church. The Minds of Men will not grow four upon it. nor will it be attended with Enmity, while Things are proposed, and answered with Modesty and Candour: Truth, at equal Arms, will eafily vanquish Error, and Menaces and Punishments are not requifite to support her, but rather render her fuspected to great and discerning Spirits: Violent Means influence only weak Minds, or the rude Multitude.

Bur indeed, a Man is prejudiced for certain Sentiments, which he has received from his Mafters, at a Time, when he was incapable of examining them; and tho' he is obliged to view different Opinions, he will not be at the Pains to fearch on what Side the Truth lies, but think it honourable to maintain his former No-

tions, and fo continues in his beloved Ignorance.

Bur the Persons I speak to, do not understand Raillery; and as foon as you refuse to think them reasonable, upon their Word, you run the Rifque of finding your felf oppressed with the Weight of Scandal, the Confequence of the Hatred and Zeal of Parties. Now, as Self-Prefervation is natural, you will endeavour likewife to make a Party, and be feconded by fome Authority. Thus Diffensions arise, but who creates them? He that proposes some Reasons to be examined, or he that opposes them by ill Treatment?

WE have feen by Experience, that Cartefianism ceased

to be a Party, when it ceased to be persecuted.

THE Galenifts in vain attacked the chymical Method in Physic; they retarded the Progress of it, but at last

it got the upper Hand.

THE Partifans of Antiquity will have all that is antient to be facred, and all that is new to be suspected of Herefy. F. Paul duest not declare his Opinion upon the Circulation of the Blood, for fear of the Inquisition, and his Friend Aquapendente communicated it to Harvey, who, in a free Country, got Honour by that Discovery.

IT is the Fate of new Things to be contradicted; but when others oppose them from different Motives, than 201/21 507

that of Information, the Steps they take, in Opposition to a new Truth, turn at last to their Disgrace. Truth tri-

umphs over Error.

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AND as for Laws, by which certain Systems appear to be authorized, either he is a Man of good Sense, or out of Respect for his Superiors, will not interpret these Laws, but with this tacit Exception; It shall so be taught, till better Discoveries be made. But dare you pretend to have found out this better Way? This is what I humbly infiss should be examined, and decided by Reason, not by Force.

In opposing Violence to Error, you add Strength to it a and fuch as it has not in itself, it borrows from the Nature of Man's Heart, to which Constraint in Opinion is naturally insupportable; for it will be as free in the Use of the Understanding, as of the Eyes. It cannot bear, that a Law shall oblige to hold this or that Sentiment for true, any more than command us to believe, that all Objects of a certain Kind are red, of whatever Colour they otherwise appear to be. Let a Man have a little Patience, and oppose calm and solid Reasons to a Miflake, it will tall of ittelt without Struggle, and Turnult; and Truth will come to Light in Time, whatever Obstacle you set against it. Lansbergius had falfified his Observations to adjust them to his Tables: How has this Fraud ended, but in leaving an eternal Blot upon his Memory? In vain therefore we rife up against new Discoveries; the Truth appears at last with Advantage, and The new Shame only will attend the Opposition to it. Geometry, which will be the Admiration of all Ages, was exposed in its Birth to the Contradiction of the most celebrated Mathematicians.

VI. MEN are not only prejudiced against Erroneous Pre-Persons, but also against Opinions, or the judices against Method of proposing them. Thus they per-Opinions them-

vert, or overstrain the Sense of an Author; selves.

frandalous, then Satyr and Zeal play their Game: They that read for Diversion laugh, and the Devout figh at it. Either Party is very numerous; when the People of the World begin to sneer, or devout Men are put in a holy Indignation, both are strongly possessed with their respective Fancy, and both insist they have Reason for it. On one Side, it is not always safe to alledge Examples, that are too recent; and on the other, the Faults of Antiquity

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are looked upon as the Faults of good Folks, that might talk idly: I would therefore chuie an Example that is not antient, and yet not entirely modern. Let a Man only recollect the Scandal and the Raillery, that passed upon the Doubting, taught by Descartes: His Vortexes; and that the Earth is a Planet, and the Planets are Earths. Long before that Time, Ramus; who gained afterwards so great a Name, was deprived of his Places, for daring to set himself against Aristotle; his Books were burnt, and he on the Point of being condemned to the Gallies.

THE Ecclesiatics, who have imposed on the ruling Powers, should at last correct themselves, and observe with Shame that an Opinion, which was formerly upon the Throne, and whose Adherents were Persecutors, should itself be persecuted, if it durst re-appear. I have seen Instances of this Nature; there are Places where it would not be adviseable to declare against Descartes, even where that same Descartes has formerly been very odious.

WERE the Game of the Geofe modish in a Nation, would there be Room to sear a Man should disturb the public Tranquillity, if he said, that Ombre or Chess was more diverting? Most of the Philosophical Speculations have just as much Relation to Government.

Tho' Force cannot destroy Truth, it checks it, and keeps it in the Dark; from whence it rises slowly. Many have Suspicions, but they dare not own, which, if di-

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vulged, might be removed by new Informations.

A TIME is coming, and perhaps is not far distant, when my Remarks on this Head will be of no Use, and will only serve to mark the Epocha's of the Progress of Knowledge. The Spirit of Toleration, which is the Spirit of Wisdom, good Sense, and Christianity, makes fo speedy an Advance, that we shall in a short Time be no more obliged to answer the Objections of persecuting Men, who would prescribe their Way of Thinking for a Law to others, than we are now to revive the musty Distinctions of the Schoolmen about substantial Forms. This Spirit has been long unknown. In vain hath the Eternal Wisdom said to his Disciples, Call no Man your Master, &c. They, who flyle themselves his Disciples, and are so in many Respects, forgetting they are Brethren, daily endeavour to tyrannize one over another, and certainly anathematize all that will not take their Language for the Rule of Truth. To the Shame of those that preserve one the correctit; and on the other, the latter a mann

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the holy Depositum of Religion. A Man that is thought to have but little of it, Mr. Bayle. has at last done what the Divines ought to have done about 1600 Years ago; and has taught them the just and lawful Way of living in Peace with one another, to the Glory of Truth and Piety (y).

VII. As to the Method of opposing an Of the Way of Opinion by the Consequences you draw from Arguing by the Use or Abuse of it; sure it is that a Consequences. Proposition, leading to false Consequences.

cannot be true; for Truth never had, nor could have a necessary Connexion with Error; fo that an Argument from an absurd Consequence must be solid, if the Consequence drawn be necessary, and drawn from a Proposition taken precisely in the Sense of the Author (2).

WE see best the Error of Principles in the Consequences that arise from them; and when we have embraced the Principle too hastily, we repair the Fault, by a Readistree of the Principle too hastily, we repair the Fault, by a Readistree of the Principle too hastily, we repair the Fault, by a Readistree of the Principle too hastily, we repair the Fault, by a Readistree of the Principles in the Consequences.

ness to quit it, on a View of the Consequences.

Some fine metaphyfical Principles, composed of general Ideas, may easily impose upon us; and even when true, may be interpreted in several Senses, and looked upon under different Faces, that give room for Contests and Evasions: When they are false, if a Man has never so little Volubility of Tongue, and be turned for metaphysical Subtilities, he will elude a direct Argument against it; but it will be harder for him to hold against the Consequences, especially if sew, and well deduced, and so well connected with their Principle, then they will end in palpable Absurdities: So that, in this Case, it will be no more than an invincible Obstinacy, a Spirit of Party, in a Word, a Sophism of the Heart, that will keep a Man in the Persuasion of a Principle so opposed.

WHEN a Man, to get rid of all Ties of Religion, will think himself a meer Machine, void of a Freedom to act; and upon the Quiet and Pleasure he finds in this Supposition, will shut his Eyes against all you will alledge against it, from inward Sentiments; you must oblige him, Vol. II.

⁽y) His Philosophical Commentary on these Words, Compel them to come in.

⁽²⁾ Teneamus enim illud necesse est, cum consequens aliquod falsum sit, illud, cujus id consequens sit, non posse esse yerum. Cic. de Fin. Lib. IV.

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by the Horror of the Confequences, to be less fond and prejudiced in favour of his Hypothesis. If the rest of Men (I would fay to him) from daily Experience of the Advantage of Laws and Religion, and in confideration (without which there would be no Law, no Religion) that Men are free, and therefore worthy of Rewards and Punishments, look upon your Opinion as monstrous; should condemn you to Death, as an Enemy of Society, that is founded on Laws; you could not complain of ill Usage: for by your Principles, there is no Injustice at all; your good Offices to others were mechanical; you neither alter nor repress any Ideas, for you think it impossible: the Weight of your own Interest has led you to favour that of others, and may to destroy it: But the great Foundation of Society is the Trust we place in Men, upon their Respect to Laws, a Persuasion they can practise them, and deserve Reward or Punishment, in Proportion to their Pursuit or Neglect of them.

B u T all odious Consequences must be very evident and necessary; and when you find a Man never so little incenfed against the Author of an Opinion, that is so opposed, this Part of his Trouble ought to be infinitely suspected. We often judge of others by ourselves; we charge our Foibles upon them, and make that a Consequence of their Principles, what is only a Confequence of our Difpofitions. One, whose Faith is only a gross Credulity and Submission to his Masters, knows he cannot examine a Thing without the utmost Confusion: If one of his Opinions be attacked, all are broken, fince all turn on an Authority and a Habit of Obedience: If he finds one falle, he will not allow that any of them is true; he must retain all or forfake all: So that, according to him, to give up one of his Ideas, is to pave a Way for all Herefies, and all is of the last Importance, when you once attend to Consequences.

Deifm and Atheifm.

DR. Cudworth supposed certain Beings, which he called Plastic Natures, appointed and employed only for the Organization of Plants and Animals, each according to the Species, and the Individual of the Species, for which it was formed. They do not reason, nor reflect, like the Soul; they have no Idea, but that of the Body they are to organize; they can have no other, are necessitated to follow it punctually. M. Bayle, who feemed to take a Pleasure in apologizing for the Atheists, and loved to furnish

To contest a Rule of Grammar is to take the Road to

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them with Reasons, sometimes in one Shape, and sometimes in another, finds something savourable to them in this Opinion: Every Part of the Universe, says he, might have received its Form, as the whole Universe likewise its proper one, from some Cause that was not intelligent: But can all these Plastic Natures, so perfectly concurring to form the Universe, be supposed reasonably the Effect of a Cause, that acts without any End, and owes its Being and Nature to mere Chance? They must have been determined by some free Cause to be, rather than not to be; and to be what they are, rather than any Thing that is different.

WHEN a Principle leads to Confequences that are manifestly absurd, we must repeat the Examination both of the Principle, and of the whole Chain of Reasoning, whereof it is the Basis. But nothing is more rare than fuch Reviews; we do not love to trace up our former Steps again: A darling Principle, joined to a Study we value ourselves upon, will make us digest the hardest Conclusions, and overlook the Extravagance of them. An Author maintains an Opinion that is displeasing, his Authority then grows troublesome; and because the adverse Party takes Shelter under it, it is questioned, whether his Writings are genuine; at least, it would be Matter of Joy, should it prove spurious. Now if one Book be supposititious, many others, and almost all the rest may be so too: But is it at all probable, that in those barbarous Ages, there should have been Men skilful enough to compose such Works, as are superior to those of our Age? What Credit, what Cunning must a Man have had, to suppress all authentick Writings? What Ability and Labour to substitute others in the Place of them; and who would have given himself all this Trouble, without the least Prospect of getting any Advantage or Glory by it? Well! what doth it fignity? The Cause is once espoused, the Hypothesis pleases, and must not be given up. This has been the Fate of a very renowned Author.

But there is a great Difference between manifeltly seeing the Absurdity of a Consequence, that forces us to retract the Principle from which it necessarily flows; and not being able to answer all the Questions, and unravel all the Consequences to which a Principle may give Way. GOD has made nothing that is useless; such a Plant is useless; therefore GOD has not made it. How do you know, that it is useless? Has it no Use, because you are igno-

Vol. II. Sa ran

rant of it? Have we always had an exact Knowledge of every Thing? And is there at this Day nothing more to

be learned?

THERE is likewise a gross Difference between proving the Error of a Proposition, by the Absurdity of its Consequences; and proving that he, who maintains that Proposition, adopts those Consequences. On the other Hand, a Man often perfifts in his Error, only because he difowns those abfurd Confequences, which, being prepoffeffed, he cannot discern, nor think them necessarily deducible from his Proposition: In this Case, he may justly be reproached with maintaining a Proposition, tending to abfurd, or more than that, to dangerous, and even pernicious Inferences; but it would be unjust, and running upon Extreams, to charge him with defigning to admit or establish those Consequences, and deeming them at least harmless ones. Some there are, who carry this Way of arguing by Consequences so far, as to impute to an Author fuch Opinions, as he expressly disclaims, because they feem to arise naturally from some of his Principles. All that can be inferred here is, that he feems to lay down, or really does lay down some Principles, which may be turned against his own professed Sentiments, and therefore he must be mistaken in one or the other of them.

THIS Method is also liable to another Abuse, when we at once reject, as impertinent and erroneous, whatever enfeebles any Proofs that are commonly used to affert a Truth. This happens for Want of fusficiently considering, that it is doing Service and Honour to Truth, to remove from it all fuch Arguments, that are apt to prevail only with Minds easy to be deceived, and which often do but increase the Prejudices taken up against it, and furnish Weapons to oppose it. Were this or that Opinion true, fays one, we should have no Certainty of the Immortality of Soul, nor that the Scripture is entire. Such Arguing as this, gravely pronounced, and boldly maintained by the Champions of Religion, is eafily admitted by a weak Mind; who not finding the Principle, from which this Conclusion is drawn, and which hereby is to be made odious, fufficiently refuted, fancies therefore that fuch a Consequence is at least probable, because it seems to follow from the Principles that are opposed, tho' not defeated. The Disputants about the Soul of Beasts, the Computation of Times, the Hebrew Points and Characters, have unfeafonably expoled themselves to the Inconveniencies of this Way of Arguing.

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Arguing. The Interest of Truth therefore requires we should at first examine every Proposition in itself, without the least Prejudice for or against it, from the Idea of what good or evil Effects might attend it. There is too much Conceit and Vanity in them, who presently give up all for lost, when you do not talk like them upon any individual Point. These People do not only flatter themselves at a ridiculous Rate, that they are not mistaken in any Point, and their Vanity cannot bear the least Suspicion of it; but they expect all they have impressed in their Memory, without Examination, should be looked upon as of the greatest Importance: Their Grammar and Physic are tied to their Creed; he that touches one, shakes the other. These are the Sophisms, of which Men are most commonly the Sport and the Property.



CHAP. VII.

Of simple Syllogisms.

HAT peculiar Turn of Ex- Definition, pression, which is used in the Schools for Argumentation, is called a Syllogism: So that a Syllogism is a certain Way of Reasoning, according to the Usage of the Schools.

II. SYLLOGISMS are distinguished in- Division. to Regular and Irregular; the Regular is composed of three Propositions, the Irregular of more or sewer.

THE Regular are divided into Simple and Compounded. In a fimple Syllogism, the Term that expresses the middle Idea, or the Argument, is compared with one of the Terms of the Conclusion, and then with the other; but in the Compound, the middle Term is compared with the Subject and with the Attribute all at once, and in one single Proposition.

He that is troubled with a greater Number of Desires, is the less content.

The ambitious rich Man is troubled with a greater Number of Defires, than a wife Man of a moderate Fortune:

Therefore the ambitious rich Man is the less content.

This is a simple Syllogism; but it will be a com-

pound one, if I fay thus:

If the ambitious rich Man is more agitated by Desires, than the wise Man of a moderate Fortune, he is less content: But the ambitious rich Man is more agitated by Desires;

Therefore he is less content.

THE Question is, to know, Whether an ambitious rich Man enjoys as much Contentment as the wise Man, who has but a moderate Share of Fortune? And this Question is decided and changed, from Doubtful to Certain, in the

Conclusion; as we have faid.

The ambitious rich Man, compared with the wise Man without Riches, is the Subject of the Question: More or less content forms the Attribute: The middle Idea is that of a Man agitated with Desires. In the first Syllogism, I compare this Idea with content, and I find it contains the Exclusion of it; then I compare it with the Idea of an ambitious rich Man, and I find it is contained in it.

Bur in the fecond Syllogism, I compare, in the first Proposition the middle Idea, agitated with Desires, with the two Terms of the Question, and perceive forthwith that it is contained in the one, and contains the Exclusion

of the other.

I would know, whether a Child can give his Father more than he has received from him. In order to this, I must attentively compare what the Child has received from, and is able to give to his Parent; to know which is the better of the two; which leads me to this Syllogism:

A Son may give his Father something better than Life. But he has received no more than Life from his Father. Therefore he can give his Father something more valua-

ble than what he has received from him.

I PROVE the Major thus.

Virtue is more precious than Life;

A Son may impart Virtue to his Father:

Therefore a Son may impart to his Father something more precious than Life.

WE may connect these two Syllogisms into one single Reasoning, thus;

Ho

He that has given to another an inferior Good, to what he may receive from him again, may receive more than he has given:

A Father has given Life to his Son, and may receive

from him Virtue, more precious than Life (a);

Therefore he may receive more from him, than he has given him.

WE see by these two Examples, that the more disengaged the Parts of an Argumentation are from one ano-

ther, the easier it is to examine them.

THE Examples generally made use of in the Schools, to facilitate the comprehending of the Nature of Syllogisms, tend rather to perplex the Understanding, than to form it, and gives but too much Occasion to look upon the Syllogistical Language, as an infignificant Jargon.

THE Schools often take Pains to prove Conclusions that are evidently true, by obscure and ambiguous Premisses, of which some may be found to beg the Question, by putting the Definition in the Place of the Thing

defined.

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Every Animal is a Substance; Every Man is an Animal; Therefore every Man is a Subst

Therefore every Man is a Substance.

To clear this Point the better, for our better Affurance that we are a Substance, let us take Leave to ask of our Masters, what a Man is? They will answer, he is a reasonable Creature. Again, let us inquire, what they mean by the Word Creature, or Animal? They will answer, a Substance that has Life, and goes from one Place to ancther. Now let us here substitute the Explication of the Terms; and this will place their Reasoning in its sull Light.

Every Substance that lives, and goes from one Place to

another, is a Substance.

Every Substance that lives, and goes from one Place to another, and is moreover reasonable, is a Substance that lives, and goes from one Place to another.

Therefore every Substance that lives, and goes from one

Place to another, and is reasonable, is a Substance.

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⁽a) Qui id beneficium dedit, quo est aliquid melius, potest vinci : pater dedit filio vitam, est autem aliquid vita melius : ita pater vinci potest, quia dedit beneficium, quo est aliquid melius. Sen. de Benef. Lib. III. Cap. XXXV.

LET me add here an Instance or two, taken like the preceding, out of some French Logics, and elaborate ones too.

No Animal is Marble; Every Man is an Animal: Therefore no Man is Marble,

Every Marble is a Stone; No Man is a Stone: Therefore no Man is Marble.

To compare compounded Syllogi ms.

III. In order to render a Proposition evident by a third Idea, we feek for an Idea, simple and that has a Relation to each Term of the Question; and then consider with Attention the two Terms of the Proposition, and the Relation they bear to the middle Term:

And as we are apt to speak according to our Way of Thinking, we are naturally carried also to express in one fingle Proposition both the Terms of the Question, and the Comparison we make betwixt them and the middle Term. Hence compound Syllogisms do more readily occur to the Mind, and are easier formed than the Simple. In those we express a Reasoning, as it appears at the first View; in thefe we form two Propositions, of what we had at first collected into one: Yet the Simple are most in Use and Esteem in the Schools; they are indeed more commodious for the Respondent and the Audience, and sometimes to the Opponent himself; and, in general Cases, more agreeable to the Design and Usage of the Schools.

IV. AM an must be but little versed in the The Usefulness World, not to have frequently observed, that of Syllogisms. the common Way of debating a Question doth but obscure and imbroil it; and after ad-

vancing never so little in a Dispute, they do not understand one another: Sometimes they object against what is not afferted; fometimes, instead of giving an Answer to a material Objection, they fly off, and find means to clude the Force of it by many cunning Evafions, or tedious Turnings and Windings. To avoid these Inconveniencies, the Philosophers have wisely, I think, agreed upon this Form of Discourse, called a Syllogism, where, first, the Conclusion of the Opponent's Syllogism ought precisely to contain the Contrary of the Question in Debate; otherwife he will be manifestly guilty of rambling from the Point. Secondly, The Respondent ought either to shew, that i-

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that the Propositions, which compose the Syllegism, are not placed according to the Rules we shall presently mention, or flatly to deny one of the first Propositions: Or elfe, if that Proposition, which he is to deny as contrary, contains Things partly true, and partly false; he must shew, that it is not opposite to him, but in the Sense in which it proves talte, and that he fo far denies it. This Proposition, thus denied, must be the Conclusion of a following Syllogism, in discussing of which, the same Method must be pursued as in the former; by carefully obferving these Precautions, if the Disputants will be fecured from running into Mistakes and fruitless Dissipations, especially since a Syllogism must consist of very plain Expressions, that it may be the easier for the Respondent to repeat, and for the Auditors to retain it. It is for thefe Reafons, that fimple Syllogisms are preferred to the Compound, because their Propositions are shorter; whereas, when the Respondent denies the first Proposition of a compound Syllogilm, which is both long and conditional, the Conclusion of the following Syllogism, must, by the Laws of Arguing, be equally long and conditional, which would be very perplexing; and therefore they are not inconvenient, except when the first Proposition carries with it an undeniable Evidence and Certainty.

V. THEREFORE particular Care has been taken clearly to state and settle the Nature The Paris of a and Rules of simple Syllogisms. The two Syllogisms.

Propositions that go before the Conclusion are called Premisses, of which that in which the Subject of the Conclusion is compared with the middle Term, might, at Pleasure, be placed first, and then that, in which the Attribute of the Conclusion is compared with the fame middle Term; but it is agreed, that the Attribute should be compared with the middle Term, in the first of the Premisses: Perhaps it was thought somewhat ornamental, to make a kind of Reternella, by beginning and ending a Syllogism with the Attribute. This first Proposition has been named Major, because the Attribute of the Conclusion is called the major Term; for the fame Reason, the second Proposition, in which you compare the Subject with the middle Term, is called the Minor, because the Subject of the Conclusion is called the minor Term. Now the Subject of a Proposition is called its leffer Term, and the Attribute its greater; because the Word that expresses the Attribute, has commonly

more Extent, and is applicable to a greater Number of Things, than that which expresses the Subject: For the fame Attribute may be often in Subjects of different Kinds: Thus Metals, Stones, Trees are hard, &c.

THE Conclusion of a Syllogism, before it was inferred, was a Question to be decided: The Relation of the two Ideas that compose this Question, was not sufficiently known; and to discover it, these two Ideas were compared successively with a third: Their Relation to this third Idea, decides their Relation to one another; and as the Subject of the Conclusion is compared with the middle Idea, it has been thought proper to place this Subject next to the Conclusion, that the Term compared with the middle Term, might present itself first in the Proposition that ends the Syllogism.

I AM in doubt, whether an ambitious rich Man lives more or less content, than a wife Man; I compare fucceffively the Idea of an ambitious rich Man, and that of a wife Man, with the Idea of a Man disquieted by violent Defires. The Premise, in which I compare the ambitious rich Man, with him who is disquieted by those Defires, I place next to the Conclusion, that the Term ambitious rich Man, being pronounced just before, may present itself first in the Decision by which the Reasoning

is terminated.

The ambitious rich Man is disquieted by a greater Number of Desires, than the wife Man, who lives moderately; Therefore the ambitious rich Man is the less content.

VI. I'm is not fufficient, that the two Pre-Rules. misses be true, to deduce the Truth of the Conclusion from them; for a Confequence is not indifferently to be drawn from any Principle; wherefore there are certain Rules to be observed, and the Syllogitms that do not conform to them, are despised, as so

many Sophisms.

THE principal Rule is that, which absolutely shuts out all that is equivocal from the Terms: For fince the Relation which the two Ideas of the Conclusion have one to another, is to be discovered by means of that, which both the one and the other have to a third Idea, it is manifest, that the whole Comparison must turn upon three Ideas. Now we cease to compare three Ideas, when the three Terms, which we combine in the Syllogism, changing their Signification, bring more than three Ideas into the Syllogism,

WHAT

WHAT is equivocal is easily discerned, when the same Term expresses two different Things, especially, if the Meanings of them are sufficient to know this Difference: We observe it less, when the Understanding only must make this Discernment; whence it is that metaphorical Terms, drawn from Corporeal Things, and apply'd to Spiritual,

eafily lead us into Error.

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I remember, that a celebrated Man, pretended to prove that all Diversion was blameable; and tho' he did not convince the Mind, yet he dazzled, and induced a great many to believe, he was in the right. His Proof confifted in faying, that to divert onefelf is a Latin Word, that originally means, to turn off from something. Man, continued he, has his Path mark'd out, Virtue confifts in following it, and the Turnings or Diversions from that Road are Vices; as if there were no other Kind of Turnings. Meditation diverts us from the Commerce of Men; and the Motions we make for their Advantage often divert us from Meditation and Prayer. Therefore our Duty may, and is often found in certain Ways, which, tho' compared with some others, from which they depart, they may be Diversions, yet are they still in good Order and Method. He therefore who turns off from his ferious Imploys, in order to unbend and to return retreshed to them, conducts himself prudently.

A Word is sometimes equivocal, tho' it expresses the same Thing, when in one Proposition it points out one Property of that Thing, and in a following another. So that instead of one Idea, you have two different Ideas couch'd under the same Word. In short, a Word is sometimes of a larger, sometimes of less Extent; and the same general Idea may be applied to more or sewer Subjects; so that this single Idea becomes double, by the different Application that is made of it. This is an Equivocal Use that

often deceives.

Montagne abounds in Equivocal Sophisms: True and fignal Friendship, says he, superfedes all other Obligations. A Secret, which I have sworn Book I. Chap. not to reveal to another, I may, without Per-XXVII. jury, communicate to one that is not another, that is, myself. When he speaks of a Friend, that he is not another Man, when he calls him a second Self, he speaks in a Metaphorical Sense.

THE Way to avoid these Errors ourselves, and to discern them in others, is not to form Conclusions on Subjects,

which

which we have not fufficiently studied, and of which we

have not clear and distinct Ideas.

In compounded Matters, Equivocal Terms do eafily impose upon us; we are often not aware of a Word's changing its Signification, in the different Parts of a long Ratiotination: Yet a small Change may make a Reasoning sophistical. I will alledge an Instance of this, taken from an Author of great Character and Genius; who, notwithstanding his great Knowledge, had so far embarrass'd himself by Equivocal Terms, as to make his mistaken Arguing the Foundation of a new System.

Several Mathematitians, observing in the M. Libnitz. five common Machines a reciprocal Proportion between Bulk and Velocity, generally judge of the moving Force by the Quantity of Motion, or by the Produst of the Body multiplied by itself; or, to speak more Geometrically, they say, that the Powers of moving Bodies of the same Kind, are in a compound Ratio of their Bulks and Velocities. As therefore it is reasonable, that the same moving Force should be preserv'd in Nature, hence it is, that M. Descartes, who looks upon the moving Force, and the Quantity of Motion to be Things Equivalent, tells us, that Go D preserves in the World the same Quantity of Mo-But to shew, how much these two Things are different, Isuppose, 1. That a Body, which falls from a certain Height, acquires a Power to rife again to it, if its Direction allows it, and no external Cause hinders it. 2. That a leffer Power is not requir'd to raife a Body of one Pound in Weight, to the Height of four Ells, than to raife a Body of four Pounds in Weight, to the Height of one Ell. In all this, the Cartesians agree with the modern Philosophers, and Mathematicians. From this it follows, that a Body of one Pound, falling from the Height of four Ells, gains precifely the same Force, with a Body of four Pounds, fak ling from the Height of one Ell: Therefore the Force of a Body of one Pound, and that of a Body of four Pounds, are equal.

Now, let us see, whether the Quantity of Motion is likewise the same on either Side. We shall here, contrary to Expectation, find a great Difference, which I prove thus: Galileo has demonstrated, that the Velocity acquired by a Body, in falling from the Height of sour Ells, is double the Velocity it acquires, in falling from the Height of one. Let us then multiply a Body of one Pound, which is as one, by its Velocity, which is as two. Let us also multiply a Body

of four Pounds, which is as four, by its Velocity, which is as one; the Product, or the Quantity of Motion, will be as four. Therefore the Quantity of Motion of a Body of one Pound, is balf that of a Body of four Pounds; and yet, a little above, we found their Powers or Forces equal on either Hand. Therefore there is a great Difference between the moving Force, and the Quantity of Motion, and so we cannot estimate one by the other; which was to be demonstrated. On the whole, fince nothing is more simple than our Proof, it is amazing, that neither M. Descartes, nor his Followers, have thought of it. But, as to himself, his too great Confidence in his own Knowledge made him go against it; and others fell into the same Inconvenience, by relying two far on the Judgment of another. In fort, M. Descartes, (as it is generally the Fault of great Men) was a little too presumptuous; and I am afraid, that many Cartesians imitate the greatest Part of the Peripateticks, whom they deride; that is, they are accustomed to consult the Works of their Master, instead of Nature and right Reason.

We must therefore say, that the Forces are in a compound Reason, not of the Bulk and Velocity in general, but of the Bulk and Height, that produce the Velocity. The first Proportion appeared at first very plausible, and seemed so to many; from whence proceeded several Faults, as is observed in the Writings of Mathematical Mechanics, composed by the R. F. Fabri and Dechales; by M. Borelli, and many other Hands skilful in these Matters. I think likewise, that this is the Reason, why the accurate Rule of M. Huygens, about the Center of the Oscillation of Pendulums, was afterwards call d in Question by some learned

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A MODERATE Knowledge of the Matters on which this Reasoning turns, is sufficient to clear the equivocal

Part of it, and overthrow the Conclusion.

WHEN a Ball, of the Weight of an Ounce, runs fixteen Foot, while another of fixteen Ounces, runs one Foot, the Quantity of Motion of each, is fixteen Degrees, and their Force as much. If the Motion of each, continues in the fame Degree, the first will still run fixteen Foot, and the fecond one Foot, in equal Times; and the Quantities will be still equal; because each Ounce of the bigger Ball running one Foot, the Space it runs is equal to fixteen Foot, each of which is run over by one Ounce. Burthis Equality has no Place, when we compare the Motion of one Ounce, which in four Times runs fixteen Foot, with the Motion of fixteen Ounces, which in one Time runs one Foot; and much less does the Equality subsist, when the Motion accelerated by the Weight, is the Cause of it.

WE know, that a Ball of one Ounce, which, in four Times, has run fixteen Foot, has gained, at the End of the fourth Time, a Quantity of Motion or a Force capable of running eight Foot, by an uniform Velocity. By this its Quantity of Motion is eight Degrees; the Ball of fixteen Ounces, at the End of one Time, has acquired a Quantity of Motion, or a Force capable of running two Foot, by an uniform Velocity; and by this its Quantity of Motion or its Force, is 32 Degrees.

IF these two Balls, delivered at the same Instant, fall on a Plain of the same Nature to give them a Rebound, every Ounce of the larger Ball will meet (in the Space of one single Motion of Time,) with two Degrees of Resistance; which gradually diminishing its Motion of Rebound will end it, after moving the length of one Foot, and the Duration of one Time; and at 32 Degrees of Motion,

it will be opposed by 32 Degrees of Resistance.

Bur a Ball of one Ounce will only have two Degrees of Refistance to furmount in the first Time; and in the fecond, two Degrees more; and having eight Degrees of Force, it must have four Times, before these eight Degrees can be destroyed by eight Degrees of Resistance; therefore it will rife during four Times, because only two of the eight Degrees of its Force, will be destroyed, at the End of each Time. During the first Time, then it will rife fix Foot, by means of the fix Degrees of Force that remain entire; and it will rife yet one Foot more, by the Means of the other two, that partly still remain, because they are not de-Aroyed but by little and little, and do not cease acting, till the first Portion of Time is expired. On the same Account, it will mount five Foot, during the fecond Time; three, during the third, and one during the last; in all, fixteen Foot; that is, as many as it descended.

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THE second Rule rejects these Syllogisms, the Premisses of which, are both Negative; for because the two Terms of the Conclusion are separated from a third, it does not therefore follow, that they are united one with another, or separated one from another; since many Things opposite to one another, differ from the same; (as for Instance) 1

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nce flance, a Triangle, and a Circle, are not an Oval;) and many Things, that are united, are therefore different from a Third, &c. The Negation, for Example, is not figurative, nor the Affirmation neither: fo that two negative Premisses, tho' they be both of them true, do not intitle us to draw, either a negative, or an affirmative Conclusion from them.

The third Rule requires, that the Conclusion must be megative, when one of the Premisses is negative: For when the Sense of one of the Terms of the Conclusion is sufficiently allied to the middle Term, to run into one single Idea with it, the other Term which is separate from that middle Term, and cannot agree with it, will of Necessity disagree with the Idea, of which the Medium partakes and is consounded in it: But it does not follow, because the first Term is separated from the third, and the second is united with the third, that the first and second must agree; and that consequently a Conclusion cannot be affirmative, when one of the preceding Propositions is negative.

VII. To these Rules the Logicians commonly add some others; but they are supersuous, because a Syllogism cannot be soed.

phistical any farther, than it deviates from one of these Rules; a Proof whereof is, that nothing can be added to them, that may not be demonstrated by one of these three, and that is not a Consequence of them. For Instance, when they say, that both the Premisses ought to be particular, the Truth of that Rule is built upon this, that the same Term taken twice particularly, may be applied the first Time to certain Subjects, and the second Time to others: Prevent this equivocal Acceptation, and a Syllogism will be good, the composed of particular Propositions.

A VERY noted and worthy Author has The Author of given us one general Rule, as sufficient to the Art of try the Justness of any Syllogism by: He Thinking. requires two Things to be observed;

1. That the Conclusion be contained in one of the Premisses.
2. That the other of the Premisses do manifestly show it. I own, a Syllogism thus qualified is good: But a Reflection that is to pass for a Rule, ought not only to be true, but also easily applicable. Now, what is the Sense of this; A Conclusion ought to be contained in one of the Premisses unless it be (what we have established in comparing the

general Propositions with the particular) that the Acknown tedging of one of the Premisses ought to engage us to own the Conclusion. Now he that proposes a Syllogism, will maintain, that one of the Premisses has this Force, and will pretend, that the other is a Proof of it. He that rejects it as sophistical, will not agree to it; but will be forced to assent, if there be nothing sophistical in the Terms, if the two Premisses be not negative, and if you conclude negatively, in case one of the Premisses be negative. Thus the Use of this Rule supposes that of the three we have established.

VIII. I HAVE already explained the Use of Syllogisms in a Dispute. Whensyllogisms. ever you have to do with a conceited Man
that has perplexed Notions, and is a great

Talker, besides, you need only ask him to dispute in Form, that is, by Syllogisms; and all his Flow of Words and Di-

greffions will vanish.

Thus likewise, to prevent imposing upon ourselves by too long Reasonings, and by sprightly but deceitful Turns, let the Proofs be reduced to simple Syllogisms, and the

Discussion of them will be easy.

THIS Method will not be extremely long, if instead of going round about to attain your End, as they do in the Schools, you begin with laying down the Truth of some Propositions, necessary to draw the Conclusion from, which you have in View; whereupon, one or two Syllogisms will suffice to prove that Conclusion. It were to be wished, this Method was settled in the Schools, that an Opponent should at first stipulate, that certain Principles should be granted him, on which, when obtained, he might build his Syllogisms.

Bun tho' it may be useful, when we dispute with others, or examine our own Meditations, to range the Proofs into Syllogisms; yet would it be improper to confine one's felf to this Method, in searching out a Truth, or unfolding a Question; Such a Constraint would injure and destroy the Vivacity of the Mind. The Subjects to be treated in this Manner must be pretty well known, be-

fore they are disposed in this Order.

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CHAP. VIII.

Of Compound SYLLOGISMS.



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HEN, in the Compais of one Definition and fingle Proposition, you com- Division. pare the middle Term with the two Terms of the Conclusion, the major Proposition, in which that Comparifon is made, is either conditional or dif-

junctive, which has occasioned the Division of compound

Syllogisms into conjunctive and disjunctive. II. SINCE in conjunctive or conditional The Rule of Propositions it is taken for granted, that he conjunctive who owns the Truth of the Antecedent, can- Syllogisms.

not without contradicting himfelt, retufe to admit the Truth of the Consequent, it thence tollows, that the allowing of the first is looked upon as the Cause of agreeing to the second. It then, in the Minor, you prove the Truth of the Antecedent, it follows, that the Truth of the Confequent is proved by the fame Means; and the Conclusion of fuch a Syllogism is founded upon this, that in admitting the Cause you admit the Effect.

Bur if in the Minor, you reject the Antecedent, it does not follow, that you may also reject the Consequent in the Conclusion; fince, tho' you do not own one of the Causes, that may contribute to an Effect, it does not follow, that there is none; and that all are foreign to it. The Truth of the Consequent may depend upon some other Princi-

ple, than that of the Truth of the Antecedent. If he be mistaken, he was not sufficiently attentive; But he is mistaken;

Therefore he was not sufficiently attentive.

THIS Syllogism is conclusive; because the Acknowledgment of the Antecedent includes the Acknowledgment of the Consequent; and the Minor takes for granted the Truth of the Antecedent. But were I to 1ay,

Vol. II.

If he be deceived, he was not attentive enough; But he is not deceived; Therefore he was attentive enough.

This Reasoning is not just, because the Denial of the Antecedent, he is decieved, does not include the Denial of the Consequent, he was not attentive: For as you may find the Truth by Chance, it may be false, that you are deceived, and yet true, that you were not attentive.

IF you would admit the Truth of the Consequent in the Minor, yet you will not therefore have a Right to infer the Truth of the Antecedent in the Conclusion; for, fince an Effect may proceed from more than one Cause, you cannot conclude from the Existence of an Effect to the Existence of one Cause, more than of another.

If he be deceived, he was not attentive enough; But he was not attentive enough; Therefore he is deceived.

THE Conclusion may be false; for the acknowledging of the Antecedent might indeed contain the acknowledging of the Consequent; but not the contrary; the finding of Truth not being the only Effect of Attention.

Bur if in the Minor you reject the Consequent, you may justly reject the Antecedent in the Conclusion; because when you deny the Existence of an Effect, you deny all the Causes of it: So that there is Reason to conclude, he was attentive enough; therefore he is not deceived. The owning of the Consequent was the Effect; that of the Antecedent was one of its Gauses; so that the rejecting of the Effect implies the rejecting of the Cause. I do not say, that the Thing mentioned in the Antecedent is the Cause of that which is expressed in the Consequent; but that the Assent given to the first is the Cause of the Assent given to the second.

The Usefulness of the Conjunetive.

The disjun-Etive Syllogism. III. WHEN you have pitched upon the Principles, from which you defign to draw a Conclusion, it is proper to see them joined in one conditional Syllogism.

IV. THE Major of a disjunctive Syllogism contains several Parts; the Minor singles out one to affirm it; and the Conclu-

fion denies all the others; or the Minor denies all, except one; and the Conclusion affirms that only which was not denied.

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PARTIII. the Art of THINKING. 275

What he knows, is by his own Discovery, Reading, or Hearing;

But it is not by Reading nor Hearing; Therefore he discovered it himself.

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Or thus:

He discovered it himself; therefore he did not learn it by Reading, or the Information of another.

V. It is manifest, that these Syllogisms Rules. are not conclusive, if in the Major you forget any Case; and if the Members, which compose it, are not incompatible; for if they may subsist together, neither will the Position of one import the Rejection of the other; nor will the Rejection of these imply the Position the former: And tho' the Members of the Major should be inconsistent, if any one be omitted, we cannot, from the consulting of all the Parts but one, conclude the Truth of this one; because it may be false likewise, and would prove so, if that Part, which has not been alledged, is the true one.

As the Understanding of Men, whose Penetration is very much confined, may easily let slip some Cases, this Way of Argumentation is not very sure, unless you proceed by Divisions and Subdivisions, that are contradictory, and by that means suffer nothing to escape.

The Difference of Colours arises either from the different Force, wherewith the Light makes the Impression, or merely from the Frequency of the Impressions. They do not proceed barely from the different Degrees of the impressing Force; for a Colour remains the same in kind, whether exposed to a strong or a feeble Light:

Therefore it comes from the Frequency of the Impressions.

THE Major leaves out one Member, viz. the Difference of the Relations of the Rays of Light, and their

Proportions, with the darting of them.

HE that is for practifing this Way of Argumentation, ought to be the more upon his Guard, fince, if it be not just, it furnishes his Adversary with Weapons against him. This happens, when laying down the same Major, but affirming in the Minor what was denied, or denying what was affirmed, you come to a Conclusion perfectly opposite. Then the greater Shew of Exactness and Contrivance this Form of Syllogism has, the more it disgraces, when the Opponent, not content to expose the Weakness of an Vol. II.

Argument fo skilfully digested, finds Means to draw an Advantage from it: And you are convinced of a double Mistake, in offering an insufficient Proof, and furnishing a strong Argument to your Adversary. This is the Fault of the Arguments, which the antient Rhetoricians called Common.

DISTUNCTIVE Syllogisms, or the Ways of Reafoning, equivalent to them, ought to be as little used as possible: You design to prove a certain Proposition; you oppose three to it; and by their Conjunction you form the Major of a disjunctive Syllogism. In the Minor, you reject three of its Parts, thence to conclude the Truth of the fourth: But is this fourth true; only because the others are false? Are there not some real Principles, of which it is a Consequence; and would it not be much better to demonstrate it by those Principles, on which it really depends? The Mind of Man is commonly embarraffed by a Multitude of Reflections; and the Limits it finds in Thinking, makes it suspect the Proofs that have no Force, but only on the Supposition that nothing is omitted. Preachers ought to confider this Rule, when they are upon explaining a Text; they often spend their Breath in refuting the Senses, which they think are not agreeable to it; after which they conclude in two Words, that their Sense is the only true one: They ought to have taken a quite contrary Method, endeavouring first to establish the Sense they think the most just, and then leaving the Hearers of themselves to conclude, that the other Explications are not equally well grounded.



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CHAP. IX.

Of Irregular Syllogisms.

HE Schools have given the Name of Irregular to those Syllogisms, that have more or less than three Propositions, tho' they have their Rules, Force, and Exactness, as well as the others.

A N Enthymeme has only one Premils; The Body is incapable of Perception; therefore it is the Soul that sees Colours and hears Sounds. There is no Art at all in the Enthymeme; he, who does not aftent to it, denies either the Principle, which is called the Antecedent, or the Validity of the Consequence.

WHEN the Consequence is denied, it must be supplied by a new Proposition, and this is not so commodious nor clear in a Dispute, where, as we have said, each Conclusion ought precisely to contain the Proposition that is denied.

II. THE Word Enthymeme is of a Greek Original, and implies, that one of the Premisses is understood in the Mind: Yet it is not always by virtue of a Proposition underflood, that a Consequence is drawn from that which is expressed. When having mea- sition that is fured two Pillars with the same Cane, I conclude thus; Each of these Pillars is

Whether an Enthymeme always concludes by virtue of a Propo-

three Lengths of my Cane in Height; therefore they are equally high; this Conclusion is convincing to me, tho' at the same Time I never thought of that general Propofition; whenever two Things are equal to a Third, they are equal to one another. Hither may be referred what we have faid of general Principles in the Second Part.

So, when I say, I think; therefore I am: In the Sense of my Thinking, I fee immediately the Sense of my Existence included; so that from my determinate Thought, I conclude my Existence as surely, as from the Idea of

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Thought in general, I conclude the Idea of Existence in general.

Profyllogism. five Propositions the Force of two Syllogisms; because the third, which is the Conclusion of the first Syllogism, is one of the Premisses of the second.

Every Idea is a conscious Act; Every conscious Act is clear; Therefore every Idea is clear.

Whatever is clear, is distinct, in the Sense in which it is clear:

Therefore every Idea is distinct.

IV. THE Mind of Man has so great a The Use of it. Delicacy, that the least Superfluity is uneasy to it, when it checks its Impatience; so that it is pleased with Enthymemes and Prosyllogisms, which, in sewer Words, clear Things the better, because they do not pall the Attention.

V. THE Name of Epicherema is given to Syllogifins, in which its proper Proof is annexed to each of the Premisses, at least,

where there is Occasion for it.

It is altogether reasonable to think, that such good Things, as have the nearest Relation to what is most excellent in our Nature, are the most capable of making us happy; for Happiness and Perfection ought to go together, since each of them are our proper End.

But Knowledge and Wisdom are such good Things as perfect what is most excellent in us, since the Understanding and Will are more valuable Faculties than the Senses.

Therefore it is more reasonable to think, that we shall make ourselves more happy by Knowledge and Wisdom, than by the Pleasures of Sense.

The Ufefulness VI. THE Epicherema likewise suits the Impatience of Men; for we are uneasy, when a Speaker concludes without having proved his Principles, which the Hearer is forced to keep in his Memory, as in a Register, to demonstrate them, one after another. There is also this Convenience in an Epicherema, that instead of offering rashly to the Mind those Propositions, by the Force of which you would conclude, it affords Time to dwell, without Fatigue, upon, and grow familiar with them, in viewing the Proofs that support them.

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Bur, on the other hand, the Proofs thus heaped up together dazzle and millead us, and he who lays them down, passes on to the second Proposition, without heed, or giving himself Time to weigh the Proofs of the first.

I THEREFORE conceive the Use of Epicheremas to be both fafe and agreeable, when a Recapitulation is pro-The Conclusion you would make being already explained, and the Principles on which it depends established in Order, all is collected in one fingle Syllogism, in which each of the Premisses is supported by its Proofs, and you have the Pleafure to fee what was before demonfirated at large drawn into a narrow Compass. A Light thus gathered does not dazzle, because it presents nothing, but what you are already convinced of.

VII. THE Major of a Dilemma is a dif- Dilemma.

junctive Proposition, that sets forth several Things or Cases. The Minor examines them, and admits or rejects them all, one after another. After which, in the Conclusion, you admit or reject in general what you had admitted or rejected in particular in the Minor.

If a Corporeal Substance were something different from Extension, this Substance itself would be extended or not

extended. We cannot suppose it to be not extended; for can a Thing that is not extended be a Subject, in which Extension and its Properties reside? If we suppose it extended, its Extension will itself be a Substance, or the Attribute of another Substance; upon which the Question will begin anew.

Therefore since we cannot suppose it either extended, or not extended, we must not suppose it at all.

VIII. A DILEMMA leems to be a Way The Usefulness of Reasoning, proportioned to the Bounds of humane Understanding, that cannot get an Affurance of a compound Subject, but by examining the Parts feparately, and in Detail.

IX. Bur that which feems to make Di- Rules for it.

lemma's necessary, renders them also apt to deceive. Nothing is more easy than to omit some Parts, which will render the Conclusion detective and contradictory: Divisions alone can remove this just Distidence (b).

⁽b) Montagne, Book II. Chap. XII. argues thus, in favour of the Pyrrhonians; If they fail, they are Proofs of Ignorance; if you

Besides this, all the Proofs that are used in the Minor, should be demonstrative; for if they be only probable, we shall immediately oppose other Probabilities to them, and, under a Form of Syllogism, entirely like it, shall prove all we should have denied, or destroy all we should have affirmed: So that, by this, we run into the same Inconveniences we mentioned in treating of the disjunctive Syllogism.

Dilemma's of that do not fail to deceive us, because we the Heart. endeavour by them to deceive ourselves:

That is, we go so hastily upon Ideas that please us, that we have no Time to observe, that the Conclusion we heartily assent to, is drawn from insufficient Premisses. A Man, who is uneasy at a Failure in his Pretensions, reasons thus;

Either I deserved the Employ, to which another was advanced, or I did not deserve it:

If I did not deserve it, why did they make me a Can-

didate?

If I did deserve it, why did they not chuse me?

A M A N may deferve to be presented as a Candidate, without deserving to be preserved. The Maxim of Seneca takes Place here; Multum interest utrum aliquem non excludas an eligas. Such a Person would have Reason to complain, if the Door had been shut against him, without the Indulgence of being heard, who would do amiss in taking it ill, that his Reasons are not complied with.

Induction.

XI. INDUCTION takes a great Number of Examples and particular Facts in several Premisses, to draw a general Conclu-

fion from them;

The Great have their Vexations, as well as Persons of the meanest Rank.

Every Age has its Inconveniences, as well as every Condition.

The Young are in Dependance; those of Age are loaded with Cares.

fail, you prove it: If they prove that nothing is known, it is right; if they cannot prove it, it is good again. The Enumeration here is too imperfect: A Man may reason ill against me; I may also reason ill against him; but a Third will discover the Mistake of either, and demonstrate that both of us are mistaken.

The one fatigue the Body, the other the Mind; therefore it is generally true, that the Happiness of Man upon Earth is imperfect, and that his good Things are blended with a Variety of Evils.

XII. In Matters of Fact, the Universa- Its Force.

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probable, as the Induction is drawn from a greater Number of Examples, and as they appear to be of all Kinds: But to be affured, that an Induction is demonstrative, we must be certain, that no Case has been forgotten; and therefore this Way of Arguing seldom rises above Probability.

WE feem to begin our Knowledge of Things by Induction. As we are born in Ignorance, and are naturally furrounded with Darkness, we grope along, inform ourfelves by Trials, and having fucceeded well in many particular Cases, we are led to draw a general Maxim from them. Thus the Arts have advanced. I could easily perfuade myself, that the Rules of Arithmetic, and the Properties of Numbers and Figures, were discovered by this Method; the Confusion, which has reigned so long in Arithmetic and Geometry, and from which they are not cleared entirely to this Day, gives Authority to this Con-After a Praxis was perfectly formed on all the Instances to which Men had applied themselves, they fearched for general Proofs, which demonstrating it, might form a Proposition that should be univerfally certain: And as they took up with the first Proofs that occurred, proper for this Design, we must not wonder, if some of them were less natural, and most of them too much compounded; fo that they were made convincing indeed, without a Reply, but not fufficiently instructive. These Proofs have the Defect of not being drawn from the true Principles of the Property which they demonstrate; because it is not the Knowledge of these Principles, that has made the Discovery of the Property that depends upon them. Men found it once by Chance, and convinced themselves of it by Induction; after which, they searched for a Demonstration, that could filence those who were tond of contesting it (c).

⁽c) The Objects of Natural Philosophy depend upon so many different Principles, and are mingled with so many particular Circumstances, which all have a Share in the Phanomena,

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INDUCTION is principally necessary in natural Know. ledge; but we have already spoken of the Manner in which we ought to confult Experience; of the Order of studying it, and the Conclusions we may draw from it, in the Chapter of the Senses, and in those of Forms, and of

Caufes.

THE most ordinary Fault of Induction is, the drawing of general Conclusions from too small a Number of Facts, We have elsewhere remarked, that general Conclusions flatter our Self-love; we applaud ourselves in the Idea of a very extensive Knowledge, and would spare ourselves the Trouble of making new Inquiries; but it may be ge-

nerally affirmed, and an infinite Number of Hift. de l' Ac. Experiences will not allow us to doubt, that in Point of Natural Philosophy, the Predes Sc. 1709. fumption ought to be in favour of Variety.

INDUCTION almost always leads to Error, when Humour or Interest have a Share in it. Five or fix Experiments agree with an Hypothesis; this is enough to think

that we cannot too often review the fame Subjects; and that we do a great deal, by getting a Certainty of that which we already know; especially since the most simple Experiments of Physic, that depend already on a great Complication of Causes, are still often mixed and entangled with fortuitous Accidents.

If the Geometricians, who ought to be satisfied with a single Demonstration, are very well contented in the mean Time to fee one of the same Truth (especially when it is of a nicer Kind) appearing by different Ways, the Naturalists have greater Reason to be pleased with it, who have nothing but some Truths, every Day liable, in some measure, to a Review.

Experiments cannot be too often repeated, too often turned into different Senses, and too subtilly managed. We must diftrust an Experiment, in which we find what we were desirous to find.

Above all, Astronomy requires a continual Labour: Nothing is yet so well fixed in it, that there is no Room for a Re-examination; we must be always observing, either to get an additional Assurance of the Hypotheses we have established, or to make the necessary Changes in them. We may say, that Astronomy, as well as the Stars, is ever in Motion.

The Experiments themselves we make to clear Subjects, produce new Difficulties: This creates a continual Production in Physical Matters, which we must not pretend entirely to exhaust. Hift. de l'Acad. des Scien. 1711. p. 7. @ 1712. p. 4. @ 1706.

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it demonstrated. An enterprizing Man will collect all that he can find the most daringly said in History, to form an Induction that may authorize his Temerity. A distrustful Man will act quite the Reverse; each singles out what is suitable to him, and is ingenious to deceive himself.

XIII. THE Word Sorites denotes an heaping up together; the Syllogism that bears sorites. this Name contains, as it were, a Heap of

Premisses, ranged in such a Manner, that the Attribute of the preceding becomes always the Subject of the sollowing, till the Conclusion is formed, of the Subject of the first of the Premisses, and the Attribute of the last of them reciprocally.

The Study of Physic displays to the Mind the Wonders of the Universe.

This Knowledge entertains it agreeably, and with Satisfaction:

One that is agreeably entertained, and with Satisfaction, is content with his Lot, and has no Fondness for those Plea-

sures that corrupt the People of the World.

He that is contented, and above the Illusions of Pleasure, glorifies the Providence of GOD, keeps his Heart in
Purity, and does not disturb the Quiet of Mankind.

Now in these last Dispositions consists Santtity.

Therefore the Study of Physic is altogether proper for Sanctification (d).

THE Foundation of the Sorites is manifest;

A contains B,
B contains C,
C contains D,
D contains E;

Therefore A contains E, because it contains all that comprehends E.

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I'r is obvious here, why a Sorites will please the Understanding of Men, that is commonly impatient; and we see at the same Time, that this Accumulation, which carries us on rapidly from one Object to another, may easily surprize us.

XIV. To

⁽d) Qui prudens est, & temperans est: qui temperans est, & constans: qui constans & imperturbatus est: qui imperturbatus est, sine tristitia est: qui sine tristitia est; beatus est: ergo prudens beatus est, & prudentia ad beatam vitam satis est. Sen. Ep. LXXXV.

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XIV. To guard here against a Mistake, we must avoid in the Sorites all kind of e-Rule. quivocal Expressions, to which the Multitude of the Terms may easily give Way: Not only each Term ought to have the same Sense in the two Propositions where it is found, but likewise the Connexion of the two Terms in the Conclusion, must not in any wise differ from those of the Premisses.

It is a Fault to act without Prudence:
Prudence will not allow us to run a Hazard.

We run a Rifque, when we give ourselves up to Guides, that are themselves uncertain.

Uncertainty reigns among Physicians;

Therefore it is a Fault to deliver ourselves up to Physicians.

As Prudence does not condemn the Use of Ways and Means that are attended with Uncertainties, except in Cases, where you may be more fully assured, or else remain in a State of Inaction: It is plain, that the Conclusion of this Sorites condemns only those, who give themselves up to Physicians, without being indisposed, or, at first Sight, without forming a Judgment of their Remedies, Method, Success, or Reputation.

THERE is a Sorites, that presents a Pile of Ideas increasing by Degrees, and in which the Sense of the Terms varies imperceptibly: One is not a Multitude, nor two neither; and the adding of one single Unity, cannot change that into a Multitude, which was not so, before such a

Render Addition.

AN Unit is not a Multitude, but it is the Foundation of it; therefore one is the first Degree of Multitude. Three comes nearer the Matter than Two; Four is a Plurality with respect to Two, but small: Five is a greater, compared to Two, but very small, with respect to Four,

and less with respect to Three, than to Two.

An Unit is not a Multitude, either absolutely or relatively: No Number is an absolute Multitude. All Quantity is relative: What is an Hundred? It is one Hundred Units, it is Ten times Ten. But is an Hundred a great of a small Number? In itself it is neither; but with respect to a Thousand it is as small, as it is great with respect to Ten: Therefore there is an Equivocation in the Terms of the Sorites, which at first deny, that an Unit is a Multitude; this is absolutely true: Afterwards it is pretended, that Three is no Multitude: This Proposition is true of

PARTIII. the Art of THINKING.

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false, according to Numbers that are compared therewith, and the Regard the Question has to a greater or a leffer Multitude.

XV. ALL the Discourses of Men are a Collection of Syllogisms of all Kinds, regular, irregular, simple, and compounded, varied in a thousand Manners. The Terms

are transposed in the Propositions, and the Attribute takes the Place of the Subject in them. The Propositions are transposed; the Minor, and sometimes the Conclusion, take the Place of the Major, and sometimes entire Propositions are understood. Oftentimes the Principle only is laid down, and the Conclusion is left to be inferred by the Hearer, or the Reader: Not only the same Term serves to express different Ideas, but the same Idea offers itself in different Terms, and the same Proposition is repeated in different Manners. There is also a Suppression of Words; sometimes we exaggerate, sometimes we speak of Things only by halves. The Style we use is in different Degrees unpolite or eloquent; one diverts us from a Point, another engages us to it by different Ways; one causes us to reject the Truth, the other to submit easily to Error.

When we are apprehensive of a Mistake, we must replace into its natural Order what is transposed; supply what is omitted, correct the harsher Parts, dismiss the superfluous, change the figurative Style into the simple, and be attentive to Things themselves, after having divested them of the Ornaments that disguise them.

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and the occasion Opposition of the Learned.



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CHAP. X.

Reflexions on a Method that has been proposed to be advanced in the Place of Reasoning, in order to arrive more surely at the Knowledge of Truth.

The Mystics.



HERE are fome Persons, and several Philosophers of this Age may be reckoned a-mong them, who pretend that Reasoning is not the true Method of informing

ourselves; but that the furest Way to the Knowledge of Truth is not to reason at all; to forbear forming any Idea, to divest ourselves of all Activity, to give our Minds passively to a divine Light, which alone is capable of instructing us in a folid Manner.

The Way of Reasoning ill opposed.

II. WHEN we demand a Foundation of them, for this new and furprifing Leffon, they feem to be in a Surprise, that the Uncertainty, which reigns in all the Sciences, and the extreme Opposition of the Learned,

who are divided into fo many Opinions, fo contrary to one another, do not oblige all Persons, who fincerely love the Truth, to own the Insufficiency of that Method, by which they have hitherto pretended to arrive at it. But this Objection only shews, that the Course we have traced and explained, the Rules thereof have not been exactly enough followed; and it proves, if you will, that it is not so easy to follow it close, as it is to swerve from it. The Difficulty in pursuing it does not justify the rash Supposition, that therefore we must forsake it, to give our-Telves up to another: But if it be hard to purfue, then we should begin early the Practice of it, and, without Intermission, continue it with the utmost Application and Attention.

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LEARNED Men have often reasoned, without finding by it, the Truths they inquired after. All that can be interred from this, is, that we ought to reason with more Precaution.

III. We are fond of ourselves, and it The opposite statters our Self-love to think, that, if we Way has its have hitherto been deceived, if we have Charms.

learnt but a few Things, and still find ourselves doubtful and uncertain, it is less our Fault, than
our Missortune. We have been ill taught; being born
in Darkness, we have met with blind Directors, who
have prepostessed us in behalf of a dazzling Method; and
when we think we have done Wonders, we find we have
done all preposterously; we have been ridiculously employed, and have endeavoured to seize a Truth, that slies
the Pursuers, but meets in all its Beauty those who wait
for it in a peaceful Repose. This indeed is very pleasing, and would be as commodious; but the Butiness is
to prove it; Hoc opus, hic labor est.

IV. But when they invite us at least to An Attempt make an Attempt in this new Way; when in this new they conjure us so tenderly to open our Way is dange-Eyes to this Light, methinks we cannot, rous.

for they tell us, if we do not find upon Trial-the Excellency of it, we may give over, and return again to that of Reason.

I would readily agree to make this Essay, if I was not perfuaded it is too great a Hazard; and if this just Fear, grounded upon good Reasons, was not also supported by Experience. When a Man has once been accustomed to despite Reason, not to attend to the Clearness of his Ideas, he thinks no more of exercifing his most excellent faculties; he does not meditate; he does not rouse himfelt to the Discovery of any Principles, or the drawing of any Confequences; and when, notwithstanding his Supineness, Ideas do arise within him, he endeavours to stiffe them: The Fertility of his Understanding displeases him, and he ever turns his Eyes from all Evidence: Thus renouncing Nature, and the Commerce of other Men, always striving to suspect his Reason, and ever avoiding Evidence, it is at last impossible his Brain should give him any Trouble: He falls first into Stupidity, and then into Deliriums and Extravagancies. Opinions the most foreign to Reason are the first that cease to be suspected;

the Pleasure of giving up himself to his Thoughts, of being no longer in Pain or Labour to suppress them, of perfuading himself, that a few gloomy Imaginations are the Reasonings of a God concealed within him; makes him obstinate in the Illusion and Error, into which he is once fallen: And by what Reflexions can you cure a Man.

whose Head is thus disordered?

IF we consider the Difference between Ideas and Sensations, and the Use to which most Men apply these two Ways of Thinking, we shall find, that Mistakes commonly are bred by deciding in Matters, of which we have not been cautious enough to form clear Ideas, and by judging of them from Sensations. This is the Source of a thousand ridiculous Prejudices; for it is by this Principle we are induced to believe the Body more real than the Soul, and to prefer the Glare of Fortune to the Beauty of Virtue: Therefore a Man, who distrusting his Ideas, abstains from forming of them, and having a Suspicion of Reasoning, forgets to reason, becomes by this Means the Sport of Sensations, and, whatever you propose, he admits or rejects it, as he finds it conformable or opposite to the Humour with which he is prepoffested. Who would not be afraid to fix himself by Degrees in a Disposition of Mind fo deceitful, and to which the passive Way so naturally leads us?

HAD we never reflected, or reasoned, we should not have been capable to know any Thing, but should have nearly equalled the Stupidity of Brutes. It is by Reflexion we have learnt to speak, to read, to write, to hear, and distinguish what is proper, to preserve our Health from that which injures it; to make a Difference between Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, Truth and Error. Reafon then has been our first Guide; and we owe our chief Obligations to it. Shall we quit it all at once to take another Way, where, by all its Lights, we view fo much

Danger?

I ALLOW we ought to distrust our first Thoughts: This is a Precaution full of good Sense: It would be wrong to match a fimple Conjecture with a Demonstration; but when that which we fee agrees with that which Reason tells us, shall we still remain in Doubt and Uncertainty? Let a Man open his Eyes to what daily happens, and he will be convinced, whether the Fear of becoming a Fool, by leaving Reason, to take up with the passive Way, be only a panic Terror.

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V. HAD GOD expressly promised an immediate Inspiration and interior Light to And faulty, such as apply to him, and renounce their

Reason, it would be Ingratitude and Want of Faith to refuse it. But neither Reason nor Revelation let us into this Secret; the Texts alledged for it by these Pretenders to Illumination, do not admit this Sense, and we must take them for illuminated upon their own Word, before we can believe their Interpretations of those Places, so foreign to that which Reason gives to them. We must suppose what is in Question; but if we are missed by a rash Supposition, to look upon, and propose to others, the Dreams of a disordered Imagination for divine Discoveries, shall we not be condemned in the Sight of GoD and Man, for running into these dangerous Inconveniences?

It is falling into the Sin called in Scripture, a Tempting of GOD; it is impertinently fetting up for Masters, when we make other Laws, and take other Methods, than those we are assured God has marked out for us: It does not belong to us to appoint our own Methods; it is subjecting God to our Fancies, to expect of him immediately the Succours he has already put in our Power. What should we say of an indigent Man, that would expect his Bread of God only, and not have also recourse to his Fellow-Creatures for it? Or of a sick Person, who would consult only the Inspiration and Advice of the great Physician? Such Men must betray the greatest

Marks of Frenzy, to make us impute these Impertinencies to their Weakness, rather than their Presumption.

IF I had been a Stranger to Wine, and the Effects of it, and were cast by a Storm upon some Island, where this Liquor was used, and were invited by the Inhabitants to make a Trial of a Kind of Drink, which according to their Notions, would infuse an uncommon Sprightline's and Eloquence, and would raife the Understanding above the Pitch of Reason, by the surprizing Ideas it would produce; should not I take a wrong Step in thus risquing the Loss of my Reason? and could I have Time to recall it, when once I had drowned it in Wine? I might fee, that these good People, who charitably faved me from Shipwreck, were devout in the very Fit of Drunkenness; that they had, now and then, in their Dif-course, some Truth, and Justice, accompanied with Expressions of singular Force: But the Fooleries I should obterve in them, their Contradictions and Extravagancies, would make me distrust an Advice, which, if it did not perfectly Vos. II.

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perfectly extinguish Reason, yet used strangely to obscure it in those that complied therewith. What mean and absurd Things do we read in the Books of Enthusiasts, among some Marks of Truth and a pious Intention? But (say they) your unhappy Reason blinds, instead of enlightening you; it cannot endure a superior Light, and when the mighty Lustre overpowers it, you charge it with Darkness. All this supposes what is in Question; and what a Door is opened to all Kinds of Error, if we be allowed to abandon ourselves to these Suppositions?

From what I have faid, it must not be concluded, that I hate these poor People, which would be equally cruel and extravagant. But Humanity, Honour, Love of our Country, and of Truth, Conscience, and Regard to Religion, all Considerations divine and humane, oblige every reasonable Man to oppose a Preservative to a Contagion, that disturbs the Minds of Men, and to check the spreading of it over those that have not yet been infected by it; and it is for their Benefit I have written this Chapter.

AGAIN, they fay, that if a natural Mistake was made up of Moral Virtues, and their Reveries should accidentally contribute to make them more religious Observers of the Maxims of the Gospel, the Wisdom of the Heart would counter-balance the Extravagancies of the Mind, and one Evil at least would remedy the other. But our LORD has taught us, that the Truth shall make us free, John viii. 32. Error has not that Power. Among the Followers of the passive Way, we see that every Man remains what he is They who are born with a happy Temper, peaceful, moderate, averse to the Excesses that plunge into Vice, and have been confirmed in this natural Bent by good Education, remain what they are, in the Profession of Mysticism; and among those who are prejudiced in favour of the myftic Way, there are Persons of great Piety and Attachment to Virtue. There are Points about which a Man may be mistaken, without ceasing to be honest, or a Child of God, the Father of Mercies. But we see likewise in the mystic Profession, that the Covetous remain covetous, the Ambitious, the Turbulent, the Voluptuous, are still the same; excepting those, whose Folly has gone so far, as to occasion their being restrained or confined: I see no where any that are less uniform, and whose Conduct answers less a Theory which they give out to be perfectly divine. All that can be faid in favour of that Harmony that should be found between the Principles of the Mind, and the Motions of the Heart, is this, that for fear of spoiling all, it

PARTIII. the Art of THINKING.

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they should put their own Hands to the Work, they do not correct themselves at all; and we see them at this Day what they have been a long Time ago; unless you will have the Charity to take for Regeneration and moral Amendment, the Change that Spleen or Age has wrought in the Behaviour of an old Coquet; or be simple enough to mistake a gloomy Outside for a wonderful Character of Christianity, which often proceeds from Vanity, or ill Humour. In general we may fay, that if the Knowledge of this I ruth, Homo homini Lupus; i. e. A Man has more to fear from Men, than from the most savage Creatures, should engage every one, that loves his own Quiet, to pray to God, that he may find Grace in the Sight of those of his own Species. This Prayer ought chiefly to regard the false Pretenders to Devotion, and, by consequence, those myltical Proteflors, who are the Quinteflence of them. 1 pretend, however, that the Public is in a Manner obliged to me, at least, for my Zeal and Courage. I encounter Antagonists formidable in all Countries on two Accounts; one is, that they make it a Law not to hear Reason; the other is, that they believe themselves to be the Apple of the Eye of the LORD, and contound (with a Zeal fuitable to their Want of Reason) their Interest with his Caule: Prejudiced by a deceitful Opinion, that in themfelves they are only passive, and that their Activity is of God, they take their Extravagancies for prophetic Raptures.

VI. How many undoubted Truths does The certain Advantages not the Mind of Man discover by Reasoning? Reason both discovers and demonstrates the Existence of GoD, and informs us of the Excellency of his Works, points out their Wonders more and more, and gradually unfolds the Principles of them. Is it not by this Means we are let far into the Knowledge of Numbers, Figures, and Proportions? It is Reason that instructs us in our Duty, shews and convinces us of its Beauty and Necessity, excites and follicites us, by noble Motives to, and affifts us by Rules and Directions in the Performance of it. Why then should I forfake so important a Guide, which I should acknowledge by its Effects, as a Gift of GoD, to follow one that is new and unknown, and of which I am uncertain, whether it be right or erroneous?

Ler a Man steadily pursue our four Rules of natural Logic; love the Truth with Zeal, be asraid of nothing more than Error, take a Pleasure in seeking and attend-Vol. II.

Reason affords us a tried and sure Way to arrive to the Knowledge, not only of most necessary, but many other Truths, that conduce to the Perfection of humane Happinels VII. TRUE it is, Men are often milla-

to explain and facilitate the Observance of them: So that

ken in their Reasoning; but their Mistake are manifestly the Consequences of neglecting those important Rules which Reason imposa upon itself; so that these very Mistakes are

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only from a Neglect of Rearecommending those Rules. VIII. WERE the Opinions and Infpira-

There is a pretions of all Enthusiasts uniform, they would tended Injpiration. be of some Weight; but they are divided into many Sects, and brand one another

with Falshood: They all agree, that Reason ought to give Place to Inspiration, as we say that Reason is the only Inlet of Truth, and Evidence the only Character of it. I they object, that we often take for Evidence what is not fo, we answer, that many among them take that for lafpiration, which is not fo; and we prove it by their Diffentions.

WERE we to go into a Detail of false or imperfet Reasoning, we should, with a little Attention, discourt how it happens to be less just or instructive; so that by reflecting on the Reasoning of others, and their Fault in it, we may improve our own. But have these visionary Men any fuch Rules for the Trial of the true and falls

Inspiration?

Error flows

fon.

DID we not know the Force of Prejudice and Paffion, the powerful Influence our Inclinations have over our Tudgment, and how readily and constantly they withdraw its Attention from fuch Demonstrations as are displeating, we might wonder, that Men, who agree so well in Principles, are fo much divided in allowing of the Confe quences; and tho' they all profess to take Reason in their Rule, yet most of them depart every Moment from it

Bur how can we wonder at the wild Notions and Incoherence of the Enthusiasts; who have no System, no Language that is intelligible, no not among themselves: They despise Reason, and have no fixed Rule to explain the Words of Revelation: All is reduced to an inward imaginary Light; that is, to unformed Notions, which

PART III. the Art of THINKING. 29

they take for heavenly Informations, according to the Hu-

mour, or Degree of Folly, that feizes them.

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No T only Christian Charity, but good Sense and Humanity unite those that follow the Way of Reason, notwithstanding the Diversity of Opinions; and they who think themselves the most knowing, do not look upon themselves to be therefore free from all the Ties of loving and esteeming others, less happy in their Discoveries, provided they appear at the Bottom Lovers of, and Enquirers after Truth. The like is observed among those who declare for the passive Way; their Conformity of Intention unites them, and fettles a kind of Toleration among them to condemn altogether the Rationalists; that is, those who endeavour to become more and more reasonable. It you give out your Dreams and idle Conceits for Revelations and Visions of Heaven, you will be admired by some, and supported by others; but when it appears that you rely on the Light of Reason, you will be accounted both horrible and scandalous.

IX. THE holy Writers instruct us by Reasoning au-Reasoning: Christ himself reasons, when thorized by he teaches Mankind, and He is pleased to Revelation.

convince them by Reasonings: And certain-

ly, fince we are born to be useful to one another, and one of our great Duties is to make Men Partakers of what we know, Reason must be a sure Way; for we have no other to instruct Men by; they cannot believe what we say, unless they understand what we think; nor assent to the Proofs we alledge to them, any farther than they perceive the Evidence of them.

X. REASONING is a Way so natural Enthusiasts and necessary, that they who recommend are forced to any other, do what they can to support it by make use of its

Reasoning; so that their declaiming against

it, ends in denying the Reason of others, because they really have it on their Side, One of the most celebrated Desenders of the mystic Way reasons in this Manner; The Soul essentially thinks, and can no more exist without Thought, than the Body without Extension. Now GOD being the Support of its Existence, must be also the Support of its Thinking: If therefore it ceases to produce any Thought, the Divine Omnipotence will create them; for, on the one Hand, the Soul will not be annihilated, because it cannot annihilate itself, and not being annihilated, it must think: Continuing therefore to think, without forming its own Thoughts, who can be the Author of them, but

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the Author of its Existence, who preserves it from An. nibilation? Forbear therefore to form your own Thoughts. and you will find them springing up in you only and im-

mediately from GOD.

THIS is the Fruit of Mysticism, which has given Birth to fo great a Number of Sophisms and childish As. fertions in a Philosopher, who formerly reasoned well. Corrupt Reason prevails in others, right Reason only in himself. If the Soul can no more exist without Thought. than the Body without Extension, it can no more hinder itself from Thinking, than the Body can hinder its being extended; fo that it cannot forbear Thinking, any more than existing, and to recommend that Cessation of Thought to it, is to recommend a Ceffation of Existence; therefore the whole of this Advice and Argument is built upon an impossible Supposition. The Truth is, that the Soul fatigued by repeated Efforts to stifle its Ideas, falls into a Languor and a Diforder, which produces unformed Ideas and confused Sensations. These, being somewhat extraordinary, are looked upon as Inspirations, especially when they have a Respect to Devotion; as the visionary Imaginations of honest hearted and well disposed Person are often mingled with the Idea of Goo and of their Duty, o Dan at

Reason ought this new Way should remind us of the Care

to be facred to we ought to take to cultivate our Reason, us. to attend to our Ideas, and to fet a great Value upon Evidence. The Divines, who think they do Wonders in decrying Reason, do not confider that they open a Gate to Fanaticism, and take away all Arguments for natural or revealed Religion, or at least deprive these rational Arguments of their Force and Credit: They shamefully deliver up Religion naked and defenceless to the Assaults of Unbelievers, and mightily prejudice the Minds of Men against it; for it is natural to think that Religion must seem suspicious and difagreeble to Reason, when we see Reason so much suspected by the Ministers of Religion. Let us then reflect, that it is equally noble and true to fay, that as we cannot cease to be reasonable, without renouncing the greatest Excellency of humane Nature; fo we cannot renounce Christianity, without renouncing our Reason; and contequently he that will not be a Christian, gives up at least in Part his Right to the Title of Reasonable, and on the same Account to that of a Man.

XI. THE Mistakes of the Abettors of

I Ask these Men, who preach incessantly against Reason, whether it be the Use or the Abuse of Reason, which they condemn? Doubtless they will answer, it is only the Abuse of it; and who abuses it more than they? and in whose Mouths do we find more sad Reasonings, Contradictions, begging of the Question, Equivocations, Sophisms of all Kinds? Let them therefore condemn their own Reason as much as they please, and endeavour to reform it by others true Reason.

God, who has made us Christians, created us reasonable: If we believe that the Gospel is of God, is it not upon good Reasons? And when we prefer one Explication of a Text to another, is it not likewise for good

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WHEN We glory in hearkening no longer to Reason, we can no longer fay any Thing that is reasonable, but by Chance; and in the Room of Reason thus for saken, there fucceeds either a trifling Capricionineis, or a Tafte for Prodigies and incredible Accounts, and often both together. The Care that is taken to advance fuch Maxims, as undermine the very Foundation of Religion, both deprives us of the Means of convincing Unbelievers, and augments the Number of them. It is melancholy to behold those, who ought to be the Defenders and Supports of Religion, borrowing the Arguments and Weapons of Libertines to attack it, and countenancing them by their Example and Suffrage; and this in a View of finding no Obstacle in Reason, that may discredit the dark and illdigested Conceptions, which their Frenzy would have received, as the effential Maxims of Religion.

THE Ministers of the Gospel ought not by any means to run the Risque of decrying Reason; but rather always to be entirely upon their Guard, and to imploy all their Attention, whenever they reason, least at any Time some faulty and unguarded Reasoning should escape them: By Explications of the Scripture, which are not grounded upon incontestable Rules, nor exactly conformable to them, and by fuch Inferences as do not necessarily flow from them, we accustom ourselves to receive, and to deliver to others Uncertainties for important Truths, they being proposed as Parts of Religion. When once our Respect for a Teacher, or for what he teaches, gives a Force to his Arguments, which they have not in themselves; when we fay to ourselves confusedly, and in the Depth of our Hearts, This is so good a Man, or this Thought is so glorious, so great and sublime, that it ought to be embraced, U 4

braced, without examining any farther, or making the least Difficulty about it; we thereby open a Door to Prejudices, and then farewel all Evidence and Certainty: Each Man's Taste will be a Proof to him. It will be sufficient, that Words may receive a Sense, and such as is most pleasing, and that must be their Meaning: They who are not Mystics have taught others the Way of being so; those have been fond of conjecturing, instead of confining themselves to see clearly; and these have fancied

themselves Prophets.

WHAT Method must we take to convince an Infidel: to bring back a Libertine; to remove the Scruples of the Prejudiced, and to convert Pagans, Jews, or Mahometans? We must get them to agree to some Principles, and by their Confequences bring them to allow this Truth; A Being infinitely holy, powerful, and good, has made the Universe, and takes Care of Mankind: They who are attacked to Virtue shall partake of his Favour, and they who despile and neglect it, shall feel his Indignation: It is from him we have the Books of the Old and New Testament : But when by this Means we shall have formed some important Conclusions, and made them Proselytes and Babes in Christianity and its Doctrines, we shall farther, in order to promote their religious Growth, and to bring them to Perfection, open our Hearts, and tell them, that Reason is a dark uncertain Light, that we must renounce it, and that Revelation abounds with Truths, which destroy Reason, and command us to despise it: Then, these new Converts of all Kinds will have Cause to say, This here is Matter of fresh Astonishment and Perplexity to us; we were delighted with the first Light and Evidence, but are now plunged again into our former Darkness and Scruples: Let us therefore begin all again, and know in good Earnest what we have to trust to: All we know surely is, that we are born, and are mortal; that we have Senfes, Inclinations, Passions, Ideas, and some Liberty, and a Defire to be informed of the rest: So we enter upon the Inquiry afresh, but at the first Inference, they will stop us fhort, and tell us, you lay down Principles, you draw Confequences; is not this Reasoning? Now you have told us, that the Way of Reasoning is very uncertain; and if at present you conceal that Flaw from us, is not this to amuse and delude us? Build upon a Principle, which you will not be obliged to abandon. () PE 60

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ART of THINKING.

PART IV.

Of METHOD.

CHAP. I.

of METHOD in general, and of Certainty in particular.



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compounded, that to

unfold all the Parts, Relations, and

unfold all the Parts, Relations, and Causes of them, and to know them exactly, we must go through a long Chain of Reslexions and Consequences. Since then we must not

only have just Ideas, and compare them, to form a Proposition, but pass from a View of two Principles to the Discovery and Certainty of a Conclusion, it would be insufficient barely to be capable of concluding from a few Principles. The Nature Nature of most Subjects requires us to range a great Number of particular Conclusions, in order to come, by their

Help and Interpolal, to a total Conclusion.

II. THAT Part of Logic, which prevents What is Mea Perplexity in this Matter, is called Method. thod. It is a Greek Word, and like most others, that express the Acts of the Mind, metaphorical, but very just, as importing the Way we ought to follow. If we think at Random, and, without Rule or Order, pass from one Subject or Reflexion to another, we shall make no Progress. but remain in Confusion. There is then a Road we must follow; and, to speak plainly, a certain Order in our Thoughts and Conclusions; that the Mind, however limited, may yet arrive to the Discovery of hidden Causes, diffinate the Obscurity of its Objects, and comprehend the Relations and Connexions of a great Number of Parts without Perplexity.

III. WE readily conceive, that if we flu-Three Ends of dy without Order, we can make no great Method. Advance, but shall often trip, and lose much Time. Method is to prevent these three Inconveniencies. When we take to a right Path, we go far in a little Time, without Stumbling, or a Mistake; that is, Method aims at Brevity, Fullness, and Certainty. This is all we can demand, that by the Help of a certain Mount of ranging our Thoughts, and pursuing our Reflexions, we shall not only guard against Errors, but learn much in a

fhort Time.

IT is manifest, that the same Rules which conduce to one of these Ends, are useful to the others: For to husband our Time, we must avoid all Embarrasments, that may hinder or diffract us in the Search of Truth; whereas Error always retards us by the Impediments it casts in our Way. Now all that wastes, or takes up our Time, or creates Mittakes, puts a Stop to the Progress of Knowledge; yet we must not confound these three Things, and make but one of them; for Certainty is fomething absolute, while Fullness and Brevity are only relative; so that a good Method ought absolutely to keep him that follows it close from Error; but it is enough that it enables us to carry on our Search of Knowledge as speedily, and to such a Degree of Fullness, as the Imperfection of our Faculties, and the Nature of the Things we study will allow of. Seeing our Inquities, even when confined to a small Number of Objects, can only approach flill nearer to a compleat Knowledge of them,

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them, without Expectations of altogether arriving at it. Things are too vast and compounded, to hope we shall ever be entirely Masters of them.

IV. SINCE Error is contrary to Know- Of Certainty.

ledge, we must say, that he who falls into it, unlearns, instead of learning. Certainty then is the greatest and most excellent Effect of Method; and when our Application to shorten Time and Trouble is in any Degree prejudicial to Certainty, Conciseness degenerates into a faulty Precipitation. He, whose great Eagerness for Knowledge hurries him on to huddle up together Certainties with probable Things, perfect Evidence with Appearances of it, Demonstrations with Suppositions, incurs a Fault, like that of one recovering of an Indisposition, who, to retrieve his Health and Strength, takes down all Manner of Food, without Distinction, and by this hurtful Mixture and Quantity, defeats the good Effects of proper Nourishment.

V. As Error always arises from supposing Rules to attain we have seen what we have not: Method, to Certainty. to prevent it, must keep us from all these

Suppositions. We are missed to suppose in this Manner, either by the Transports of Passions, or by a Multiplicity of Objects; and when perceiving some of those many before us to be what they really are, we suppose, in the rest, what we do not see in them.

To strengthen our Resolution never to decide by the Influence of our Affections, we should often attentively confider, how ridiculous it is, especially for such, who, by their Profession ought to be farthest from this Weakness, to determine any Question out of mere Humour, Interest,

Vanity, or any other Passion.

It is also very necessary, that they who are upon any Composure should carefully compare what they wrote; when their Hearts are calm, with what fell from their Pens, when they were under any Emotion; whereby they will learn to be upon their Guard against all that may ruffle and impose upon them: The Pleasure of reviewing what they have judiciously thought, will grow upon them by this Comparison, and give them a more lively Sense of it; and, to secure the like great Satisfaction, they will more and more refuse the Suggestions of their Passions, whose Determinations never fail to be more or less mortifying to those, who have not bid Adieu to all good Sense.

Ir follows from the first of these Remarks, that to study methodically, a Man must begin with consulting himself; he must examine and try himself over and over again, and watch his Inclinations and Aversions, his Defires and Fears; and, at least, not set himself to consider a Question, till he is disposed to discuss it with the Tranquillity of a Mind free from all Prepossession. You have Helps in the First and Second Part to facilitate the Ob-

fervance of this Rule.

Is we would avoid the Mistakes arising from a Multiplicity of Objects, and the Perplexity it creates; since, when we have too many Things upon our Hands at a Time, we are apt to be in a Hurry, and to survey them but imperfectly; we must have the Precaution to view the different Parts and Attributes of a Subject separately, and be well acquainted with each of them, before we consider them together. We must join them by Degrees, and make the Union of them clear and familiar to us, before we advance to the Connexion of three. We must begin with the Study of the most simple Things, and be well settled in it, before we undertake the Search of more compounded ones; and never hazard the Resolution of a Question, till we are thoroughly acquainted with the Principles necessary to clear it.

VI. I T is no Wonder, that we meet fo These Rules are rarely in the Works of Men, the Truth glitmuch neglected tering in its Purity, seeing these useful and necessary Rules are so little followed. The

Mind of Man is foon tired with Principles; it fets too fmall a Value on what is fimple, and does not love to dwell long upon it: Curiofity, and the Defire of shining among Men, draws it on to what is difficult and compounded; it is fond of being employed on what is known but to a few (e); the faintest Light that presents itself on those Subjects immediately flatters its Vanity; it submits to them,

⁽e) The famous Sir I. Newton has entitled one of his Works, Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy: This Title is pleasing; we are charmed to think we can find in one Book what is to be known of the Mathematics, to make a Progress in Physic, that we may not be stopped every Moment by Passages depending on the Knowledge of Arithmetic and Geometry; but in some of the very first Pages we are surprized to see, that

them, and if it happens afterwards to be convinced of a Mistake, it is not ashamed of it, as thinking the Difficulty of the Thing a fufficient Excuse: Besides, intricate Matters are not much contradicted; few being capable to found them so closely, and they that are, knowing the Difficulty of the Undertaking, do more eafily pardon the Detects in the Performance.

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Most Readers favour the Temerity of Authors on these Subjects, and help to deceive themselves. The first Chapters of a Book, are those that are commonly read with the greatest Eagerness; Men hurry on the more, the longer a Task is, that lies before them, and the farther they are from the End of it: But, as they advance in Reading, they often grow cold and remiss, in Proportion as the Book is less new. Then, the first Chapters are usually the most easy to be understood, and as they contain the most fimple Matters, so much less Attention is bestowed upon them. Many Suppositions are past over, without Examination, and Principles agreed to without Proofs, in hopes that the Confequence will verify them: The Author makes them familiar to his Reader by frequent Repetitions, and then he doubts no more of them, but confounds them with the most common and undeniable Notions. Authors themselves are surprized by the same Causes, and in the same Manner, as they impose upon their Readers.

to understand this Book, a thorough Understanding of the Mathematics is requifite, whose Principles we promised ourselves we should here find explained: They fay, this learned Author has been asked, why he did not take Care to put his Thoughts in a clearer Light, and make them easier to all that would know them; and we are affured, he answered, That he was very well pleased to be understood but by a few; were it only to be fafe of many troublesome Questions, and Objections of fome puny Wits, who then would have understood him but in Part, or by Halves. This Answer, in the Mouth of so great a Man, is aftonishing; for you cannot oblige Men of a moderate, or still less Share of Understanding, more, than by telding them, that you do not understand them.

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Montagne says of such Authors, who affect Brevity, that their Meaning should be guessed at ; their Reputation is the greater, but we profit the less by them. But with whom have they more Reputation? Not with those that judge of the Value of Things

by the End and Design of them.

A M a N undertakes to explain a Subject, and while he is engaged in that Defign, some faint Lights and imperfect Ideas arise in his Mind: From thence spring some Conjectures, which being delightful to him, they are agreeably received; and instead of applying himself to a rigorous Examination of them, he only thinks what Essay to make of, and what Advantage to draw from them. He adopts them for Principles, and builds bare Probabilities upon them; and when the Structure is raised, and its Parts connected together with an Air of Symmetry and Proportion, he then supposes his Foundation to be firm and solid, and imagines his Suppositions sufficiently demonstrated by the Success. This is one Original of so many Castles in the Air.

VII. WE must therefore begin with the continuation most simple Considerations and first Principles, distrust all Supposition, and be scrupu-

lous of the very Principles themselves; then we must examine, whether the Thoughts, by which we would illustrate a Subject, be reducible under the Head of Ideas, or Sensations: If under the former, they must be ranged in their several Classes; that is, we must see whether they belong to the Imagination, the Senses, or the Understanding: Whether they present to us Objects considered in themselves, or the Relation they have to us, or to one another; and in this Review, we must attend to the Rules of each of these Classes, to know whether the Ideas be conformable to the Rules, and have the Accuracy, Justness, and Perspicuity that is necessary to make them the Basis of our Reasonings.

AFTER having thus examined the Ideas feparately, we must compare them together, and not pass over any Proposition in which we compare them, without being certain of their Justness, with regard to the Rules of this Way of Thinking. To the Examination of the Propositions, that of each Argumentation must be joined, agreeable to the Laws of this third Manner of Thinking; and after you are convinced of the Justness of each Conclusion, you must examine what Connexion there is between two of them, then that between three, till you come to the last Conclusion.

Against equivocal Terms.

Against equivocal Terms.

Cause of Error: They chiefly impose upon
us in Reasonings, consisting of a long Train
of Parts and Consequences: A single equivocal Word sliding in, for Want of Attention, may throw us into more
than

than one Mistake. One Part of a long Reasoning sometimes will not serve to prove a distant Conclusion; but when you may take in it a Sense different from that in which it was demonstrated, as the Sense in which a Proposition is true, depends upon the Sense and Force of the Proofs that established it; if that Sense of these Proofs be not prefent to the Mind, we may eafily mistake in what we attribute to the Confequence which they prove; (f) and we shall be the more liable to mistake, as the Propositions, from which the Proofs are drawn, are more remote one from another in the fame, or disperied in feveral Works; for then it generally happens, that we only remember in the gross, that they are true, without representing to ourselves the exact Sense in which they are true: Therefore it is not sufficient to remember one Truth, in order to make it a Proof of the fecond; we must likewife remember the Proofs of that First, and fee in what Sense, and why it is true; without this it may happen, that we may draw its Confequences in a Sense foreign to it, and thus a Truth may become an Occasion of Error.

THE Way to remedy this Inconvenience (whether we Compose ourselves, or peruse the Works of others) is, to be well acquainted with each first Truth, before we pass to a second; to define the Terms of it, and to put their Definitions in the Place of them. By this we shall see distinctly what they mean, and shall be certain, whether, in the Reasoning, whereto they belong, we take them precisely in the Sense they ought to be taken. We must also continually recollect the Chain of Proofs, examine into and often repeat them. When they are dispersed, to facilitate an accurate Review of them, we must unite them together, and range them in exact Order; and, if we do not distinctly remember them, we may, to avoid any

Confusion, put them into Writing.

IX. In our Examination of a long Chain A Help to Circof Proofs, we must suppose we have to deal cumspection. with a Mind that expects to be convinced,

and

⁽f) It is not enough to discover a Truth, we must also know what produced it; for if we mistake its Cause, we may fancy it solid, when it is not, or the contrary; and besides, we may give to the Truth we have discovered more or less Extent, than it ought to have. This must take Place only in Matters of a very nice and delicate Nature, and certainly when a Question is so, a Geometrical Demonstration may deceive us, if not applied with the utmost Precaution, and traced up to the Source of the Truth, and its first Principles. Hist, de l'As. 1704. p. 129.

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and is not at all inclined to yield eafily; we must weigh all, and every Point, with the same Care and Distrust, as if this was really our Case; by this Means no Article

will pass Muster that is not convincing.

I'r were to be wished, that Men would apply themfelves more than they do to purfue the most fimple and eafy Methods, and only to establish their Conclusions upon Reasonings of a small Extent. General Principles, from which numberless Consequences flow, are most proper to begin with, and necessary to be made entirely pre-Tent and familiar to us, and then we may draw the most immediate Consequences from them. A Truth that is proved by a long Train of Reasoning appears to do more Honour to him that demonstrates it, and to give a greater Idea of the Extent of his Understanding; but, tho' the Simple has less the Air of Erudition, it is the Effect of a more perfect and rare Knowledge, and a more exquisite Talent, than the compounded.

polition and the Examination of it.

X. WHOEVER has practifed Arithme-We must put an tic may remember, that when a Calcu-Interval be. lation feems to be defective, as not agreetween the Com- ing with the Proof that ought to justify it, you often try in vain, by repeating the Work, to discover the Mistake; a second casting up ends in the same Sum as the first, and produces precisely the same Mis-

reckoning. The Imagination takes, the fecond Time, the fame Road as the first; the same Traces offer themselves afresh; what was feen and supposed, is feen and supposed over again: The same happens in other Compositions: The Mind having bestowed all its Attention upon a Composition, and filled it with all it was capable to produce, will fee nothing more, when it reviews and examines it. The deep Impressions made by the Efforts in the composing, soon revive and lead it into the same Track of Thinking. Therefore a due Time should intervene between the Composing, and the Examination of a Work, that it may be, in some Measure forgot, and the Impressions of it wore out; and then it should be examined, as if it were the Work of another.

THIS Precaution is still more necessary with regard to the Stile, than the Matter. A Man who has thought on a Subject, before he wrote of it, is reminded of it by half a Word; and the slightest Infinuations, and most negligent Expressions, are sufficient to bring it to his Remembrance: But after he has been some time employed on other Sub-

jects,

PARTIV. the Art of THINKING. 305

jects, which have, at least, weakened the first Ideas in his Mind; he will be able to find, in reviewing his Work, whether these Expressions do easily revive his Thoughts, and render them immediately present; or whether it be necessary to give them a greater Force and Clearness. Sometimes a Sentence will occasion but little Trouble to its Author, and not detain him a Moment, which yet will clog his Readers, mislead some, and dispirit others; this also must be considered; otherwise a Man will rather be inclined to let some small Trouble sall to the Share of his Reader, than to give himself the Fatigue, and often the Mortification too, of correcting and retouching his Works, and thereby disallowing them in some Measure.

THE Imagination of an Author, as he writes on, grows warm, but a Reader takes a Book into his Hand in cold Blood: Now what pleases a Man who is in Emotion, will not be equally relishing to another, who looks upon the same thing without Emotion, and examines it with Calmness. We must not lightly suppose, in a Reader, such Dispositions, as perhaps are not in him; he, who instructs us, paints the Things, he would have us know, in his Discourses. Now a Painter that is prepossessed, will intermix some Lines in his Piece, that may not appear so just and

like, to those, who shall examine it with Attention, and without that Prepossession.

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XI. An Author that labours moderately, ways to preand is not impatient to finish his Work; who does not exhaust himself by studying with cefficy of Cortoo much Fire, Toil, and Assiduity, but rections.

Force to it, will fave himself the Pain of many Corrections.

We are soon weary of striking out what we have written, and find it hard to begin again, what we looked upon with Pleasure as finished. Supineness makes Men opinionated, and apt to repeat the Saying, What is written is written. It were to be wished, a Man had so happy a Memory, as to form to himself an entire Plan of his Undertaking, before he attempted to execute it; and to trace at once the whole Texture and Disposition of each Part of that Plan, before he took Pen in Hand to fill it up. But they who have not so extensive a Memory, nor so strong or lively an Imagination, may relieve themselves by some short Sketches, or Minutes, to serve them for a Memorandum; and before they begin to polish and perfect the first Part, they should stay till they are determined upon all the rest.

Vol. II.

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Bur if these Rules were always to be nicely observ'd. it would cost too much Pains to be an Author: I have faid before, that to be wife and happy, a Man must give up the Fondness of getting a celebrated Name; he must wholly fet himself to think justly, and to be useful to others, in conducting them to the Truth. We must remember, that an ambitious Passion, misunderstood for Glory, often tends only to cover us with Shame and Difgrace. Most Authors start up and disappear like Mushrooms; most Books have the Fate of Almanacks; we buy them up eagerly, to throw them quite afide at the Year's End; nay, often their Reputation is not so lasting, and can we be surpriz'd at it? One Author writes only to amuse himself, another to refresh his Memory, another takes up a Course in haste, to repent of it at Leifure; others write out of Spleen and ill Humour; fome think that every new Hypothesis makes them free of the Republic of Letters; they take it for granted, and their Imagination begets a Sort of Dreams that never entered the Heads of any others: This is a Satisfaction to them, they believe themselves eminent. Most Men write only for their Disciples, that are entirely disposed to applaud and receive what they fay, without Examination; they suppose in a Reader such Dispositions, as they defire to find in them; or are content to think in general, that they write for a Multitude, that read without Application, and pass over many things, without demanding a Proof of them: Some write only for the Learned, and think it would derogate from their Sense, and the Value they owe to themfelves, if they were to make themselves intelligible to Persons of a moderate Knowledge. I wish that Writers had it at Heart to be intelligible to all the World, or at least, to as many as their Subject will allow; but, least in writing for the Advantage of many, a Man should neglect himself, and be careless, it is of Importance, I thimk, for an Author to reflect, that his Book will only have one Reader at a time; and to imagine his Book to be only in the Hands of an exact, judicious, delicate, and fevere Reader; that it is for fuch a one he must write, and that he is the Judge to whom he must be prepared to give an Account of every Thing. This Supposition appears very proper to animate a Writer, to bear him up in his Labour, to confirm his Attention, to make him circumspect, to dispose him to a fevere Examination; in a word, to give him Justness and Exactness.

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WII. I FORESEE, that the Mind of Man, Reflections prowhich is naturally averse to take Pains, and per to sweeten impatient in its Enterprizes, will be startled our Toil.

at the Sight of fo many Precautions. But if any Man will shew me a more easy and furer Method, to avoid Mistakes, without all this Care, and these slow Advances; without this watchful Attention, and thele frequent close and assiduous Reviews; I will be the first to renounce my Opinions, and retract advising of them: But if we hazard a Mistake, when we neglect any of these Precepts, we must either take that Venture, or resolve upon a Labour that is annexed to our Condition. In this, as well as on an infinite Number of other Cases, we must have Patience, be content with our Lot, and bear our Destiny with a quiet Mind(g). Our Life is short, and the Strength of the Body but weak at the best. The Earth does not afford us Nourishment and Conveniencies of Life, 'till-torced by Industry and constant Labour, and mere Necessity obliges us to submit to its Conditions. There is the same Necessity of Art, Labour, and Affiduity, to enrich the Mind with Knowledge, and establish in it the Truth in its Purity. The wife Man is agreeably taken up with this Labour, and reaps the good Effects of it; while the Supine who gives it or does it only with Regret, reaps very few Advantages by it; and confining himself to know barely, how to repeat some Reasonings he has never examined, passes his Life in an Ignorance of that great Art, which entitles the Masters of it, to be justly called reasonable Men.

THESE careful Steps, this close Examination, these scrupulous Reviews, endows the Mind with Penetration, Force, Justness, and Fertility; Qualities that afford Advantages and Ornaments, preferable even to the Knowledge ittelf thence arising. Six Months of Study so directed, procures the Mind a greater Sufficiency, than fix Years of fuch Reading, as is usually practifed. Besides, this Spirit of Reflexion, this Care to examine, to recapitulate, to review leverely, is not to tatiguing, or discouraging, as some imagine, Custom makes it easy; we are born for it, and there are Delights annexed to those Labours that we are destined to go through. One of the greatest Pleasures of the Soul, is to feel its own Strength, and this Pleasure encreases, as that improves, and as we grow more excellent in the Ule of it. We may fay, that a Man, who can take all this Pains, is VOL. II. X 2 happy

⁽g) Nihil horum indignandum est; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo his legibus vivitur. Sen. Epist. XCI.

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(i) Quod evenit in Labyrintho properantibus, ipfa illos velo-

citas implicat. Sen. Ep. XLIV.

⁽h) Toties mihi occurrunt isti, qui non putant sieri posse, quicquid facere non possunt, & aiunt nos loqui majora, quam que natura humana sustineat. At quanto ego de illis melius existimo? ipsi quoque hæc possunt facere, sed nolunt. Quem destituêre tentantem? cui non faciliora apparuere in actu ? Non quia difficiliasunt, non audemus, sed quia non audemus, difficiliasunt. Sen. Ep. CIV.



CHAP. II.

Of Short Ways.



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I. COME now to the fecond Advantage of Method, and observe, first, that the Causes, which delay and retard us, may be reduced to four. The first is obstacles to internal and consists in the internal, and confifts in the our Progress. Imperfection and Tardiness

of our Faculties. But we have already, in the First Part, offered some Helps to excite and enlarge them. The fecond Hindrance, is the Multiplicity, and the Composition of Objects. The third is their Objective; and the fourth, our Distractions and Digressions, in useless and unnecessary Matters.

THE Multitude of Things is a Bar to our advancing, not only, because it requires more Multiplicity. Time to know many Things, than to know a few: but it stops us short, and retards us, not, in forcing us to take many Steps in a long Way, but in hindering us

to take any Steps at all. WE have often a Mind to do all at a Time. In the View of a great Task, the Mind confumes itself in useless Efforts; and being willing to do too much, it does nothing at all. Often when we are willing to make too much haste, we retard ourselves, by exhausting our Spirits, and not taking the best and shortest Method. Ipfa illos Velocitas implicat. The best Way of making haste, is not to go too fast. Festinatio tarda est.

THINGS are often difficult, not in themselves, but because we dare not attempt them, or believe them to be difficult: That is, their Difficulty arises, not so much from the Composition and Extent of the Objects, as from a Fear of finding them more compounded than we would have them; fuch an Apprehension proves a Check to us.

WHEN the Mind is aftonish'd at the Idea of a difficult Question, or at the View of too compounded an Object, it dares not undertake the Study of it; and when it X_3 dares

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dares, it does not know where to begin: If it ventures to begin at one Part, it foon quits it to begin again at another, and for fear of not having chosen right, it quits again On these Occasions then, we must this fecond for a third. resolve to divide an Object, and to contemplate each of its Parts separately, in order to collect them afterwards by degrees; and we must take care, not to pass to a second, till we have acquir'd a very clear Knowledge of the first (k). In difficult Questions, we must not act like Boys, that lose their Courage at the Sight of too long a Theme, and waste more Time in complaining, than would have mastered the greatest Part of it; or like a Woman that is terrify'd at a Folio, tho' she would boldly attempt, and read from one End to the other, as much, diffributed into feveral fmaller Vo-Therefore Courage, Constancy, and Resolution, prevent too great a Delay.

Obscurity. put him into a lazy Astonishment, or vain Fluctuations, if he proceeds in order, and gives his Attention to the Study of a Subject, till he is thoroughly

instructed in the Principles on which it depends.

It is only for want of regular Thinking, that so many are so tiresome by the Length of their Discourses. When they do not lay out a Plan of what they are to say, before they begin, and neither give themselves the Trouble to distinguish, what has an essential Relation to the Thing they propose, from useless and impertinent Circumstances; all what is said to the Purpose, is bury'd amidst a Heap of Superfluities. A Man has forgot one Circumstance, and to bring it into his Narration, he must repeat Part of what he said before; in repeating of which, another Idea presents itself, that requires, in its Turn, a new Parenthess; and going thus from one Deviation to another, none can tell whence he set out, nor which Way he intends to steer his Course.

IV. ALL

⁽k) Illud tamen prius scribam, quemadmodum tibi ista cupiditas discendi, qua flagrare te video, dirigenda sit, ne ipsa se impediat. Nec passim carpenda sunt, nec avide invadenda universa; per partes pervenitur ad totum. Aptari onus viribus debet, nec plus occupari, quam cui sufficere possumus. Non quantum vis, sed quantum capis, hauriendum est; bonum tantum habe animum: capies, quantum velis. Sen. Ep. CVIII.

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IV. ALL we have remarked in the first Part about Attention, and the Way to raise Distractions. and keep it up, may serve to prevent Distractions, and guard the Mind from these floating Thoughts, and tumultuary Starts, that are the ordinary Amusement of Men of mean Understanding.

In o not only call Rambling, those Thoughts that prefent themselves in Disorder, and have no Relation to our Subject, but likewise those Ideas, which are remote, tho' not entirely foreign to it, and lead only to it by distant Windings. A Man may sometimes come to his Aim by setching a Compass; but this takes up more Time, it perplexes and fatigues the Attention, and is apt to surprize, and precipitate into Errors.

When we are once habituated to proceed from simple to compound Notions; to begin with Principles, and advance by Steps from Consequence to Consequence, we immediately lay hold on the Principles we have occasion for; and whatever is not serviceable, to apply them to the Subject in Hand, or to clear the Question, does not so much as offer itself to our Thoughts.

Bur as I have faid, we must be settled in a Habit of going from simple to compound Ideas, and have a Relish for what is simple. Methinks some Fatality, averse to our Repole, keeps us at so great a Distance from simple Ideas, to throw us into Excursions and Embarrassments. (1) Men naturally avoid taking Pains; a compounded Thing, on that very Score, because it is so, gives more Trouble than what is simple; yet notwithstanding we commonly begin therewith, and it is a long Time, after much Correction and Fatigue, before we are weaned from what is manifold and compounded. In this Respect, the Sciences and Arts have And whence should this proceed; but the fame Fate. that the Mind roufing itself, and exerting all its Strength to pierce into what is obscure, and unknown to it, produces more Ideas than it has occasion for; and being tond of its own Productions, gladly lays hold on all, and embraces whatever prefents itself. A secret Custom may contribute X 4

(1) Brevis erit, si unde necesse est, inde initium sumetur, & non ab ultimo repetetur, &c. Cic de Inv. Lib. I.

The Glory of having taken the shortest and most easy Way is commonly missed by the first Inventors of things. History de l' Ac, 1705.

muchtoit; we have been used to admire what is complicated, and to prefer it to simple Things; we know that the compound ones are ordinarily more difficult; and fancying all we do not know, to be in the Number of difficult Things, we suppose all to be compounded, the Knowledge whereof cannot be obtained without some Trouble. The less Clearness we see in a Subject, the more Principles, we think, will be required to know it, and in this Prepossession (m) we do not so much as imagine it possible to be clear'd by simple and easy Methods.

To avoid the Inconvenience of going round about, and taking those unnecessary pass in Think-Circuits, which only serve to prolong the Time and fatigue us, I think (n) we ought always to begin with a right stating of the Question,

from which we shall easily learn the Degree of its Simplici-

ty

not

(m) It has been imagined, on a very slight Foundation, that the Tincture of Coral might be a great Remedy to cure venemous and malignant Distempers; this Secret has been search'd for by many antient and modern Chymists with as great Care and

Pains as the Aurum Potabile.

The great Importance of it did not give them leave to think it might be found in a plain and easy Manner; they form'd a vast Number of Operations, most of them far fetched, and differing one from another, and they gave them out for successful. Yet M. Lemery has assured us, that he try'd them all without Success, and has searched for this Tincture of Coral long ago, by other Methods. He thought it worth his while, to be at some Pains for it, not in Expectation of its Medicinal Uses, but to comply with the general Run that obtained in Favour of it, he made use only of simple Dissolvents, and found the White Wax. Hist. de

l' Accad. 1710. p. 66.

(n) The Works that may be serviceable in him (Cicero) to my Design, are the Philosophical, especially those of Moral Philosophy. But to confess the Truth boldly, (for when once a Man has passed the Bounds of what seems to be modest, there is no surther checking him) his Way of Writing appears to me to be tiresome, or whatever is like it. For his Presaces, Desinitions, Divisions, Etymologies, take up the greatest Part of his Work. All that is lively and moving in it, is bury'd in the Length and Compass of his Preparations. If I spend an Hour in reading him, which is a great deal for me, and recollect what I have learned from him, containing Juice and Substance; I find the greatest Part of my Time is lost in Air; for he is not yet some to the Arguments that serve his Purpose, and the Reasons that properly touch the Knot I would untie. As for me, who desire only to be wiser,

ty and Composition. Then we must remember, that the Principles, which are naturally sit to resolve a Question, ought to be more simple than that Question; and, till we have found Proofs more simple than the Conclusion to be drawn from them, however demonstrative those may appear that have offer'd themselves, we must not insist upon them, but seek for others. This Method will beget a Taste of Simplicity.

AGAIN, such a Method offends against Brevity, and does not sufficiently husband our Time, and Trouble, that proves a Truth by a Gradation of Consequences, which it might have immediately demonstrated, by the same Principle, which serv'd to prove the great-

est Part of its Consequences.

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VI. THIS, I think, is a Fault Mathematicians are liable to, when, after having demonstrated Examples. the Powers and Properties of the Leaver, they account for the Effects of other Machines, by confidering them as Kinds of Leavers; and they feem to pretend, that some real Effects are owing to the Properties of some Lines, that are not existing but in the Imagination, which lends them to the Machine. So in approving or condemning an Action, it is more natural and ready, to compare it immediately with the Rule of Right and Decency, than to some Species of Actions, which we have already prov'd praife-worthy or blameable; whatever that Rule be, whether a Conformity to humane Nature, or the Proportion of Actions to the Dignity of their Objects, or the Advantage of Society. Such or fuch an Action is a Branch of Avarice, a Sort of Vanity, a Kind of Thett; or fuch and fuch an Action has a Character of Clemency and Generofity. This is what Men commonly lay down, to give themselves a Right of praising, or cen-

not more learned, or eloquent, these Logical and Aristotelian Divisions are not at all to the Purpose. I am for beginning at the last Point, I know very well the Meaning of Death
and Pleasure, why does he amuse himself in dissecting them. I
inquire at first setting out for good and strong Reasons, that
will instruct me to sustain the Effort of it. Neither Grammatical
Subtilties, nor an ingenious Contexture of Words and Arguments
will serve me. I want Discourses that presently go to work with
the strongest Doubts, but his are weak, and beat about the
Bush. They are well enough for the Schools, the Bar, and for
Sermons, where we have time to sleep and dream, and then
a Quarter of an Hour after are time enough to recover the Clue
again. Mont. B. II. Ch. 10.

censuring them: But if another disputes any of these Terms with them; then, to prove that they are proper, they will find themselves obliged to compare them, either with the Principles that make Avarice odious, or with those that render Generosity amiable. Besides, since the moral Nature of an Action entirely varies, according to its Circumstances, to conclude that an Action is good or evil, it is not enough to find in it some Relation to a general Idea of a Kind of Action that is amiable or hateful, we must also be fenfible, how far its Circumstances will alter it, and apply the fundamental Rules of Good and Evilto each Action determin'd by its Circumstances. Nothing is more important, than to make those Rules very familiar to us, by immediate and frequent Applications; by which Means, the Use of them will become entirely easy; and by a happy Effect of Custom, we shall follow them, like the Rules of a Language, without continually reflecting upon them; Tafte and Habit will have the Influence of Reasoning: besides, it must be allowed, that Error does not so readily slide into the immediate Application of a Principle to its Confequence, as it does into a Chain of Propositions.

So likewise in Logic, three or four (at most) general Principles are sufficient to decide the Validity of Syllogisms. A Syllogism that deviates from a particular Rule, is defective only because it offends against a general Principle. Thus instead of perplexing the Mind with a Multitude of Rules, we ought rather to acquaint ourselves with the Use of a few very simple Principles, on which they depend, by a continual and immediate Application of them to all the

Syllogisms whose Justness is or may be suspected.

IT requires more Pains than one would imagine, to lop off what is superfluous, when a Man has not naturally an uncommon Force and Justness of Thinking; and it often happens, that a Work is not less valuable for the Things

that are not in it, than those it contains.

Brevity without Obscurity and Dryness. VII. It is a great Art to know how to be concife without being obscure; andfill, greater, to add Ornaments to Brevity. (a) It is in vain to hope for obtaining this Advantage by examining and correcting your Compositions accord-

ing

⁽⁰⁾ Brevis est L. Crassi oratio, si tum est brevitas, cum tantùm verborum est, quantum necesse est; aliquando id opus est, sed sæpè obest vel maxime in narrando, non solum quod obscuritatem affert, sed etiam quod virtutem, quæ narrationis est maxima ut jucunda, & ad persuadendum accommodata sit, tollit. Cic. deOr. Lib. II.

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ing to a certain Number of Rules. (p) Precepts are not fufficient to adjust a Proportion which depends on too many Circumstances, and such as vary infinitely. I think these two are very simple and general Lessons, and of great Use. 1. To be entirely Master of your Subject. 2. To forget yourself, in a View of being only useful to those you address your Discourse to, or for whom you speak.

A MAN may certainly express with Clearness, what he conceives with Clearness; he may easily range, in the most proper Order, all the Parts of a Subject he is Master of, and thoroughly acquainted with; Perplexity, and Confufion, will produce vain Lengths and Obscurity. If, together with the Regard of the Benefit of those he speaks to, he has a perfect Knowledge of the Subject he treats of, he will fay all that is necessary to be understood by his Hearers, and no more, if he loves them, and is tender of abusing their Patience. But so it often happens, that the Delight Men take in being copious, draws them on to heap Ornaments upon Ornament, each of which may have its Worth, but take them altogether, they have none. The Auditorsclaim the Speaker's chief Regard, and do not allow him any other View but that of informing and moving them; and think nothing more impertinent, than to call a Multitude together, for no other End, but to be fo many Witnesses of the Pleafure he finds in haranguing, and making a Parade of his tertil Imagination.

ALL Brevity is relative. He that pronounces only one Period, is too long, if it be useless; and when a Man says no more than he ought to say, he is not long, tho' he speaks a long Time. (9)

Ir is one of the greatest Arts, to convey into your Reader's Mind what you would have him think, without telling it him. The confiding in his Sagacity flatters him agreeably; but this is difficult to effect; for when the Sense must be conjectured, it is painful and baulking. Brevity is always acceptable, when it is void of Obscurity and of any Appearance of proceeding either from Pride or Supineness. Men are often obscure, because they will not be at the Pains to speak

⁽p) 2. — Quæ probandi, docendi, persuadendi causa dicenda sunt, quemadmodum componamus, id est vel maximè proprium Oratoris Prudentiæ—non tam numerare quam expendere. Ibid.

⁽q) — Dent operam, ut res mutlas breviter dicant, non ut omninò paucas res dicant, & non plures, quam necesse sit— Vitanda est brevitatis imitatio—— Cic. de inv. Lib. 1.

fpeak more intelligible; or, out of a foolish Vanity, pretend to pass for such as are very familiar with the most difficult Things, and would not so much as be suspected that

any thing could be obscure to them. (r)

Ir feldom happens, that the Length of a Discourse doth altogether arise from the Multiplicity of Things it contains: An Orator cannot but be sensible when his Task grows burthensome; and the assiduous Attention he employs to produce his Ideas, and to range them in good Order, makes him easily foresee, that they will incommode his Auditory. He is most frequently too long without knowing it, when, in the main, there is no great Matter in what he says.

When our Ideas are not very clear and exact, and we are not Masters of our Subject, we are apt, for Fear of not being understood, to heap together synonymous Words and Paraphrases, and so run into idle and extravagant Lengths, that discourage the Hearer, and make the Speaker appear more obscure than he is. This happens but too often; In the Heat of composing we link many synonymous Terms together, and let in many Repetitions, which must be blotted out in reviewing the Work.

I HAVE read somewhere, Longum iter per precepta, breve per exempla: I cannot agree to it: The Way by Precepts, or Rules, is the only sure Way; it is therefore the shorter: we always hazard Mistakes when we frame our Actions by Examples, which we have not examined by solid Rules; so that it is, in Effect, the longer Way.

VIII. BEFORE I finish this Chapter, I must False Brevity. distinguish between false and true Brevity.

making greater Dispatch than you ought: Consusion and Error still draw back; and the farther you go on in a wrong Path, the more remote you are from your Journey's End. If you read a Work without examining it, you will get sooner through it, but make never the greater Progress in the Knowledge of Truth; for, besides that you did not set about to search for it, possibly you might take up Variety of Errors instead of it; and though you should have embrac'd it, yet that may be upon Uncertainties, and not by sure Marks and evident Characters. 2. You find some Authors think they are very concise, in making a Letter serve for a Word, and a Word for a Phrase.

⁽r) Sit talis, ut res potius quam se ostendat. Sen. Ep. LXXV. Plus significas quam loqueris. Hoc majoris rei indicium est; apparet animum quoque nihil habere supervacui, nihil tumidi, Ep. LIX.

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a Phrase: But if these Words are obscure and equivocal : if their Sense be not determinate, they infallibly carry us out into excessive Lengths, by the Mistakes and Disputes they occasion: And this is what has happened by the scholastic Jargon. Nay, even when concise Expressions are not equivocal, I do not think they are really fo, if it requires much Time to know them readily; and this is always the Cafe, when they are very numerous. Methinks Herigone has committed this Fault; one might fay he chose, like fome Alchymists, to write enigmatically; the Explications of his Characters make almost a small Dictionary: befides, I do not fee the Defign of these Abbreviations; for I can read the Words writ out at full Length, as speedily as those that are abridged by these Notes, 3 4: And I am not more retarded by the Word Circle, then this fingle Figure O, nor by the Word Center, than by this O. We write to inform Men, and, I think, it is easier to learn and remember, when there is an Agreement between the Writing and the Voice, than when that, which you read, is different from what you pronounce. The Plainness, Evidence, and Ease of it gives you a speedier Comprehension of the Thing, and by Confequence a greater Advance in it. Befides, we are fooner acquainted with that which is clear and eafy, than what is obscure and painful. The constant Efforts of Attention are fatiguing and check our Progress: Nay, the reading of one Line more (and how foon is a Line read) may fave a deal of puzzling, and thereby many There is much Difference between faving of Time, and faving of Paper, otherwise an Impression in small Characters could be reckoned among the compendious Ways which a good Method propofes.

WHEN the Mathematicians content themselves with including in a Parenthesis, the Figures that shew where you must fearch for the Principles on which their Demand is founded, what do they fave by it, but their Paper? For it we must go to look for these Propositions, besides the Time it takes up, the Chain of Reasoning is thereby interrupted; and if, to prevent this Confusion, you are satisfied with an imperfect Remembrance of them, you accultom yourself to Obscurity, and to suppose that to be true, which you do not understand by sufficient Evidence. If a Divine, instead of rehearing the Words of a Text, should only cite the Chapter and Verse, and so pursue his Argument founded upon those Words, he would shorten his Expreifions, but take up more Time, if his Quotation must be looked for; which would be requisite, unless all the Scripture were known by Heart.

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are but few, and therefore easily learnt, and are absolutely necessary. For in those Kinds of Operations, we are obliged to use Characters which are as necessary in Algebra, as Cyphers and Figures in common Arithmetic. When we are once well acquainted with a compound Idea, and have put its Parts successively and duly together, in order to bring it into a Reasoning, or represent it to ourselves by a single Act of the Mind, and to see it at once, it is proper to express it in the shortest Manner. The Obscurity of the Laws of the Collision of Bodies, and the Consusion of the Proofs relating to them, ceases when, in demonstrating them, we use Algebraical Expressions; and nothing proves better the Clearness and Necessity of this Sort of Language.

Bur if we do not often recollect the Things which those Characters represent, we may insensibly get a Habit

of a methodical Ranging of Words without Ideas.

MANY indeed accuse the Mathematicians of too much Brevity: and this not altogether groundless. Works you frequently meet with the Word Therefore: This Particle means, that what you read is a Confequence of what you faw before; wherefore you look in the Lines immediately preceeding for the Principles of the Conclusion that follows them. But in vain; you must guess at them without the Aid of the least Quotation to discover them. An Author who has confidered his Subject throughly, and, having ranged his Ideas in his Mind, before he expresses them upon Paper, has made himself very familiar with them, and in writing them down, has carefully attended to them, and has nothing more at Heart, can he rightly Suppose the same Preparations and Dispositions in his Readers? Does an Author write only to inform those that nearly equal him in Knowledge, Vivacity, and Extent of Understanding? Is it allowable to despise all he thinks below him, to please himself in letting them know their Inferiority; and obliging them to purchase the Light he affords them, by taking a world of Pains to obtain it? If the Mathematics be not very useful, it is not just to bestow so much Time and Attention upon it; if it be, they who have studied it ought to render it easy to others. None of them will disallow, but that we are not born only for the Mathematics: There are a great many Things that, without doubt, concern us more, both with respect to Body and Soul. But (fay some) they furnish us with the Key to Natural Knowledge, and by imparting a true Tafte of exact and clear Thinking, they iecuro

fecure and facilitate our Improvement both in Morality and Divinity. I allow this, but demand withal when a Man has acquired that Advantage from it, whether he ought to fpend almost all his Life Time in providing himself with the Means proper to bring him to these Advantages? I ask again, whether the Assistance of the Mathematics towards clear, just, and extensive Thinking, regards only Men of the first Rank in Genius, who have least Occasion for it, or those of a moderate Share of Parts, whose Nature requires more to be perfected by it. If so, it ought to be proposed to them in a Manner proportioned to their Talents, and not with an obscure Brevity, that dispirits, retards, and oppresses them; and is therefore fitter to bear them down, than to fortify and raise them; this is a Truth,

whereof there are but too many Instances.

IF, in aWork of Natural or Moral Philosophy you should pass, as fast as Mathematicians do from a Principle to Consequences that are not deduced from it, but by the Help of feveral others, for which you rely on the Sagacity of your Reader, who should not have Cause to complain of this Obscurity? yet these are Matters far more easy to be Will a Pleader be allowed to reason upon understood. Laws which he does not alledge, or of which he does not youchfafe to cite the Number or Place? When a Preacher. who conceals Part of his Principles and Proofs, is not understood by his Auditors, has he reason to despise them as Men of a mean Understanding, and not worthy of his Regard? They who please themselves in speaking thus by halves, and look upon those as ignorant, who do not immediately apprehend them, do not rightly confider the Wrong they do to themselves; for if they, that do not easily understand them, are to be accounted void of Sense, themfelves will be but just superior to such as have none at all.

3. ALL Repetitions are not superfluous or long to a Fault; it is of great Use to represent a useful Maxim under different Faces, whereby it is render'd more familiar and

ferviceable to us.

4. THERE is likewise a Brevity more deceiving than the former; when, hastening to an End, we do Things superficially. This Defect is frequent in the Schools; when a Course of Study begins to grow more prolix than usual, a Cry is made against the Length of it, tho it contains nothing that is needless. On the contrary, a Tutor or Professor is praised and admired, who makes his Scholars Philosophers, Divines and Lawyers, &c. and all this

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by Means of some abridg'd Systems to which he confines himself. But what are these Systems? Meer Skeletons, and imperfect ones too; they are a Sort of Dictionaries, that, at most, explain only the Language that is current in the Sciences. These Systems do not give you the full Explication, but only the Titles and Heads of the Subjects that should have been cleared and in every Particular laid open and explained, by those who would deserve the Name of Philosophers or Divines. It must be owned, that great Illusions have prevail'd in this Subject, and it is a Kind of Quack-Tricks, to give out for a Course of Natural Philosophy, what a Man might have an exact Knowledge of

without being a whit the better Naturalist.

WHEN a Man has read a methodical Heap of Definitions, Divisions, and Subdivisions, in which he is told, for instance, that Motion is the Translation of a Body from one Term to another, or a successive Application, &c. that it is divided, with Respect to its Quantity, into vigorous and weak; with respect to its Determination, into Right and Curve, direct, reflected, interrupted, simple and compound. When he has, at the same Time, learnt the Definitions and Divisions of Qualities, when he has said, that Heat confifts in a promiscuous Motion of Particles, and is distinguished into actual and virtual, &c. He will have by Heart all these, and many more general Notions of the fame Kind, without being able to account for the least Phenomenon, or to comprehend an Account of it from better Hands, if it be any thing particular. Let a Student of Philosophy, that knows his Tutor's Compendium mighty well, enter a Laboratory, and be examined about the Nature of the Operations he is shewed, the Causes, and Manner, in which they produce their Effects; put into his Hands the ordinary Looking-Glasses and other Mirrours, make him observe the Beauty of the Colours cast upon Objects by a Prism, their Confequences and Variations; this great Talker and Pretender of the Schools, will not only have nothing to fay, but the Matter and Method of his Learning have not enlarged his Mind enough, to make him comprehend the folid Explications, which true Naturalists give of these Particulars. It is the same in all other Cases of this Kind; after a Student has finished his Courses in the Schools with the Approbation and Applause of the Master, and now thinks himself more than half a Doctor, he does not know any thing at all of the Workings of Nature. Why has he been shewn the Surface, without letting him into the Bottom of it? Why, fay fome, the Method of Learning muit

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Vol. II.

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must be shortened. But this is a great Mistake; it is pretending to instruct, without conveying any real Knowledge. It is a melancholy Thing, that they who have Courage enough to undertake the Remedying of these Faults, instead of being affifted in their Cares and Labours, find many Obstacles to surmount, that are thrown in their Way, even by those, from whom they ought to expect it least of all (r) We have not learnt this, lay they are in great Stations, exe find it difficult to understand it ourselves, and how shall young Persons be able to conceive it? Their Teacher ought to consider, that instead of vainly endeavouring to raise them up to his Sphere, it is his Duty to stoop down to theirs. Young Men, naturally averse to Labour, and ignorant of their true Interests, hearing grave Men thus reason, think they may justly refuse their Attention to what is most worthy of it. But if they, who are advanced in Years, and fixed in Employments, do not care to learn, and Youth must not be fatigued with too nice and difficult Lessons, when will Mankind be wifer? Shall we have only a few Scores of Persons in the World, who know how to read the great and admirable Book of Nature; and shall the Rest of Mankind be condemned to see only with corporeal Eyes, and confined to use their outward Senses only, and be like the brute Creatures, as to any Satisfaction (5) they may have in the Objects that furround us, and in the Structure of them? When a Person of a low Degree of Understanding, has once filled his Memory with a System thus abridg'd and superficial, he thinks he knows every Thing; because he sees nothing beyond it, and he imagines he has master'd a Science, when he has got a Smattering in each of the Subjects it includes: And then judging of his Ability by the little Time he has taken to compass this Knowledge, his Vanity foon swells up to the Measure of his Ignorance. Ton solle sugo nos l

(r) Dolendum fanè est, per malevolorum Calumnias, præclaros hominum conatus, spectatamque industriam, magno rei

litterariæ detrimento distineri. Huetius. (s) There are in some deep Mines, a Number of Wretches, who are born and dye there, without ever enjoying a Glimpse of the Sun. Their Condition is like that of these unhappy People, who are ignorant of Nature; the Order and Course of these great Globes, that roll over their Heads; to whom the greatest Beauties of Heaven are unknown, and who have not Light enough to enjoy the Universe. Hift. de l'Ac. 1712. p. 108.

LET a lazy Doctor hug himself in his Fortune, Rank, and Title; this may be allowed him, without any great Detriment to Mankind; perhaps, were he more active, he would put all Things into Contusion: but if he doth not regret to appear ignorant in his own Eyes, let him not fret at others Endeavours to know more; we shall leave him in quiet Possession of the Repose he is in love with; lethim not envy others the Pleasure they find in their own Labours. (1)

5. THERE is also a mistaken Brevity, that confists in faying a few Things, in a Time that would be fufficient to fay a great deal more; and this pretended Brevity often imposes upon us. We object to the Length of a Pleading, but the Advocate, to justify himself, answers, that of the four Points, on which he was to treat, he had only difpatched the first, and made but three Reflexions upon the fecond: now this is the very Thing he is justly blamed for. It would be wrong to reproach him with his Exactness, to which he is obliged by all the Ties of Interest, Honour, and Conscience; but his Length is inexcusable, in not anfwering those Engagements within a Time, that might have been fufficient. What he alledges to apologize for his Fault, proves it upon, and condemns him for it.

6. SOMETIMES, for Brevity's Sake, we heap together Idea's, Reasons, and Explications, one upon another, in the fame Period; without enlarging our Subject in the Brevity is defective, when it offends against Perleast.

spicuity.

Dum brevis effe volo, obscurus fio.

(f) Tædio laboris ad vilitatem sui compelluntur ignavi. Curtius

Laudum tuarum bæc est vel maxima, quod non folum quod opus effet diceres; sed etiam quod non opus effet non diceres-Cic de Orat. Lib. II.

Edidi ut me temporis angustiæ coegerunt, scitum est enim causam conferre in tempus, cum afferre plura si cupias, non queas. id. Lib. III.

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are ignorant of Nature), the Order and Course of their great Globes, that roll over their Heads, to whom the greatest Beststies of Heaven are unknown, and with have not their courses.

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VOL. II.

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C H A P. III.

The Means to approach to a compleat Know-

and Miller of the Inflance, we change the Name

I. TUDE of Knowledge would be the Master-piece of In what Sense Method, if it could bring us we seek after to it; but the Shortnels of it. Life, and the Narrownels

of our Faculties, cut off the Hopes of attaining it. Yet, if it cannot put us in Possession of this great End, it may carry us nearer to it; and, setting us in a right Path, further our Advances with all possible Speed.

II. THE Objects of our Studies are either necessary or contingent: I call those necessary How we find that do not vary at all, and are always fuch it in necessary as our Idea's represent them to us. Thus a Objects. Circle is necessarily a Circle; its Nature and

Properties can be no other. So likewise are all Figures and Numbers; infomuch that to know them, we need only be attentive to the Ideas we have of them. If we will not fuffer any Thing to escape us in this Kind of Objects, we must begin with the most general Ideas, and proceed by Degrees to the Divisions and Subdivisions, that are gradually more determinate, and fee, that the Parts of these Divisions and Subdivisions be contradictory; that nothing be omitted; and that the Species, into which we distribute a general Idea, when taken together, may not have less Extent than their Genus. Thus I would divide a Line into Right, and not Right, or Curve. The Lines we compare together, either keep always, when you lengthen them, the fame Distance, or they approach to one another, and tend to an Union. When they join, they enclose a Space, or no Space at all. A Space is inclos'd. within three Lines, or more, &c. Thus when you go on Step by Step, you pass from the Genus to the Species, without omitting any One of them.

III. Bur here two Precautions are pecellary; First, to make an exact Division, Precautions in one Part must be Positive, and the other subdividing. Negative; and to subdivide, into new Spe-

cics,

cies, the Negative Term, (which only declares what one Part of the Division is not, without telling what it is,) it is necessary to change its Name from Negative to Positive: We ought therefore to take Care, in making this Change, that we do not meddle with the Extent of this Term, but leave it all entire. The Neglect of this Rule, will lead into Mistakes; if, for Instance, we change the Name of a Curve, or Figure not Rectilinear, into that of Circle; or divide the Curve Figures that are not circular, only into three Kinds, the Ellipsis, Hyperbola, and Parabola.

We must distinguish the Knowledge of Principlesfromthat of Consequences.

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IV. Secondly, AFTER descending from the first and most universal Genus, through the whole Scale of its Species, and expressing each by Names that are clear, and not equivocal; we must not fancy to have therefore an exact Knowledge of every one of the Species, and of the whole Extent of their Properties; much less of the total Result of

their Respects and Combinations. All that we can reafonably afpire to, is to mafter the Principles, that will lead us by Degrees to this Discovery; or enable us to comprehend, what a lucky Chance may unfold to us. These Principles, which we comprehend, without knowing all that is deducible from them, and on which depends the Knowledge of all that the Subject contains, may be obtain'd, if we form a just Idea of the Production of a Thing, and know how to represent it to ourselves. For, fince all that a Thing is, and all it contains, was form'd in the Time when its Causes produc'd it; fince, I say, the Generation of it gave it all it has, He who forms to himself a just Idea of the Generation and Production of a Thing, knows the Principle of each of its Properties; and in applying this Principle to each Property, he will eafily find the Manner of its Production, and the Necessity of it.

V. To know the Birth and Production of How the Na- a Thing, you must at first suppose it not tare of a Thing to be at all, and then consider what must nemanifels it cessarily happen to fetch it into Being: Thus, I suppose two Lines lying close together; Now, that they may form an Angle, one End of the upper Line must rest upon the lower, and the other remove from it; and if the same End of the removing Line rests on a Point distant from the two Extremities of the lower, there will be two Angles produced. The rising Line that forms them, inclines at first more on one Side than the other; this Difference of Inclination gradually decreasing, ceases when the two Angles come to be equal, but appears

again,

PARTIV. the Art of THINKING. 329

again, as the fame Line continues moving the fame Way, and forming fuccessively the two Angles, still contracting

one, and proportionably enlarging the other.

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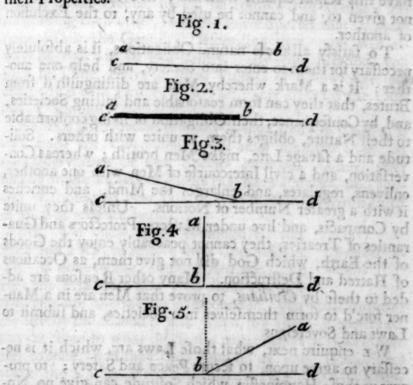
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I am persuaded, that the Skill of making any considerable Progress towards compleat Knowledge, consists chiefly in studiously improving the Ideas of the first Production of Things, and in a Readiness to apply their Generation to their Properties.



IN Fig. 1, you see the two Lines that are to form the Angles.

2. They are join'd, without any Interval.

3. The Extremity a begins to be elevated, and to make the Angles abc, abd.

4. The Angles come to an Equality.

5. They are again unequal, and c b a encreases in

Quantity just as much as abd decreases.

To know all the Engagements which Men enter into, when they unite in Society, we confider every one of them first separately, and in no Alliance or Commerce. In this State, they have a sovereign Master, their Creator, who certainly requires, that they should live worthy of the Nature they have receiv'd from him; and since they are his Workmanship, to take Care of themselves, their Lives, which they hold of him, and improve their Faculties for the Use they were given; for he did not design they should be left uncultivated, having endowed them with Qualities

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Qualities capable to be made more perfect. He likewife will be the Object of their Care and Attention, and be known, admir'd, and glorify'd by them. Nothing is better, more suitable, more worthy of God and Man. All these Engagements every Man enters into as soon as he is born. God has also granted them all the good Things of the Earth, for their Use and Pleasure: But since all have this Right equally from him, 'tis evident, that it was not given to, and cannot be used by any, to the Exclusion of another.

To fatisfy all these natural Obligations, it is absolutely necessary for them to enter into Society, and help one another: It is a Mark whereby Men are distinguish'd from Brutes, that they can form reasonable and lasting Societies, and, by Confequence, their Obligation of living conformable to their Nature, obliges them to unite with others. Solitude and a favage Life, make Men brutish; whereas Conversation, and a civil Intercourse of Men with one another, enlivens, regulates, and enlarges the Mind, and enriches it with a greater Number of Notions. Unless they unite by Compacts, and live under Masters, Protectors and Guaranties of Treaties, they cannot peaceably enjoy the Goods of the Earth, which God did not give them, as Occasions of Hatred and Destruction. Many other Reasons are added to these by Civilians, to prove that Men are in a Manner forc'd to form themselves into Societies, and submit to Laws and Sovereigns.

We enquire next, what those Laws are, which it is necessary to agree upon, to secure Peace and Safety; to procure us those Happinesses which Solitude can give no Notion of, and to put us in a Condition of better succeeding in the Endeavours of improving our Talents. In pursuing these Ideas, we see the Rise of Societies, and of the En-

gagements Men thereby enter into.

VI. WHEN the Objects, whose Nature and Properties we study, are not form'd upon How we know contingent Obour Ideas, but, on the contrary, we are to jects. form our Idea's upon them : The Method that leads us to the Knowledge of them, is something different. Here our first Lessons must be taken from the Impressions Objects make upon the Senses. As these Objects are numerous, we must review them by Degrees, and confider them one after another; and, left the Multitude of them should entangle us, we must reduce them to some Kind of Unity. To this End, we must take Notice what two Things have in common with one another, and what a third Thing has in common with thefe

two,

two, and so on. Thus all the Objects that encompass us may be brought into a few Classes: Those which agree and resemble one another but in a few respects, will compose the first Genus's, or most general Classes; and those Genus's which centain very different Subjects, will be distributed into several Species, one after another; always observing, that those Species, which are the highest and nearest to the Genus, should be compos'd of Genus's less resembling each other, than the lower Species that are more remote from the Genus. Descending thus, you will always approach to an Uniformity. By this Method, you may in Time, arrive at some Fulness of Knowledge, accompany'd with Order; but it will only clear up the Outside of Things.

As this Distribution of many Beings into few Classes, is only made for Convenience, you may multiply them, as the Observations of new Species increase. Thus, after having made a Class of Plants that have Flowers, and another of those that bear Grains, you must then form a third

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will. To know them thoroughly, you must find a Way to resolve their Composition. Chymical A-This is done by the chymical Analysis; and nalysis.

fince the Principles that arise from the first Analyses are themselves compounded, you must improve the first by the second; and when, by these Repetitions, you are come to what the Senses may observe as most simple and minute, you may then venture at some Conjectures about the Nature of the still minuter Particles, which constitute these smallest and simplest Principles, perceiveable by the Senses. To make good these Conjectures, you must combine these Principles, and try several Experiments upon them, attending to all the Varieties and Effects that result from them.

For Instance, I distill a Plant; I extract from it, 1. Water: 2. a more subtle, light, and penetrating Liquor, than Water, which I call Spirit: 3. Another Liquor, more dense and instammable, which I call Oyl, or Sulphur: 4. Some rigid Parts, which the Water easily dissolves, to which I give the Name of Salt: And 5. a gross Remainder, which does not dissolve in Water, which receives the Name of Earth. Then pursuing these Analyses farther, I find, that the Spirits are compounded of Volatile Salts, floating in a little Water, and sometimes mix'd with some sulphureous Parts, extreamly attenuated. By the Repetition of the Analyses, I find again, that Oyl itself is entirely reducible into Earth and Water: Now, to distin-

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guish the watry and earthy Parts, from the oily or fulphureous, I venture to guess at the Constitution of the oily Molecules, and readily perceive, that they are of a Shape proper to fasten and attach one to another; and when I run over the Effects of Oyls, they all verify this Conjecture. And knowing, that rough Surfaces are more proper to unite and adhere to one another, than smooth and polish'd ones, and of less Roughness and Inequality; I conceive, that the Activity of Fire may carry off these little Points. which renders the Parts rough and unctuous. But I fee likewise, that if the Fire may raise and carry them away through the Pores of the Veffels, it may also restore them: I therefore try to endue with Sulphur, by Fire, what had For this Purpose, I pitch upon Mercury, none before. that does not feem to me to be oily, and whose folid Texture may eafily retain what it receives of the Fire; I find Means to fix it by Fire, and, by Consequence, to bind its Parts, and then to restore its Liquidity to it, in making it lose those Parts that cemented it.

VIII. Bur in using this Analysis, or in endeavouring, by fuch-like Operations, to How this may advance our Knowledge, we must beware of be done on a Sure Foundaprejudicing Certainty: Conjectures must be tion. esteem'd as Conjectures, and not embraced as Truths, till they be first demonstrated. They may pass for demonstrated, when, after having faid, If my Conjecture be true, such or such an Effect will, or will not, necessarily follow, you find that Experience agrees with these (t) Consequences.

To come at this Certainty, you must use Precaution, and take Time. Neither of these Two mightily agree with the Impatience of our Mind; we are more fond of a great Number of Probabilities, than of a few Certainties; and to justify this Fondness, we endeavour to prove and lay it down for a Rule, that the Mind of Man cannot go beyond meer Probability, and that therefore we ought to be con-Water, which I call Sur

tent with it.

(1) A Reafoning, tho very probable, yet can prove nothing, unless it be supported by Facts carefully observ'd; for in Physical Matters we are so little clear-lighted, that we often deceive ourselves, when we think we are well fortify'd with Facts and Reasons. The most plausible Reasonings are liable to be overturned by some Facts.

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PARTIV. the Art of THINKING.

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A LIVELY Imagination eafily forms ingenious Conjectures, it proposes them in an agreeable Manner; Men receive them with Pleasure and Applause. Time, and a more exact Inquiry lay open the Defects of these Conjectures, and inform us, that they want Solidity. Upon this, an Author endeavours to comfort himself in a Persuasion, that the Thoughts of others are not more just than his own; to the consuting and discrediting of which, he takes a deal of Pains, that would often be better bestowed in adding Strength to them. It is thus that Men traverse one another in the Road of Truth, and mutually prevent their

attaining to any Degree of Certainty.

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NATURAL Philosophy is now in its Birth: In the Ages before the last it was hardly known at all. Whence was this? Why, Aristotle knew nothing of Nature, and Men were intatuated to think, he knew all that could be known. To promote the rifing Study of Nature to any Purpole, they must endeavour to discover what is yet unknown; and, by Confequence, take Care of imagining, they know, what they are as yet ignorant of. But then, we must cast no Obstacle in the Way of a fair Progress, nor flatter our own Levity and Idleness with a Fancy, that the Mind of Man cannot discover, what it might very well, provided due and sufficient Care were employ'd. The Pleasure we taste in believing our Conjectures true, and the agrecable Eafe we find in representing Things to ourfelves in comely Order, regularly fram'd, and distributed into general and special Kinds; this Pleasure imposes upon us, and draws us on to suppose, that Things are really such as we imagine them to be. By this Means, we love to figure to ourselves a small Number of Elements, and to conceive them to be more fimple, and much more uniform among themselves, than they really are. For many Ages past, Men were visionary enough to imagine, that a Sphere of invisible Fire furrounded the Air; a Sphere, which they, would not have thought on, but from the Pleasure of puting their Ideas in Order; for, feeing Water furrounds the Earth, and is again encompais'd with the Air, it was taken for granted, that Fire must likewise envellop the Air. They suppos'd also, that every Planet describ'd a perfect Circle. This Hypothesis was founded on the Regularity of that Kind of Motion, and the Ease of imitating it. But to fave the Inequality of Appearances, how many Circles and Machines did not Men put together? And yet all thefe Machines were not fufficient.

WE conceive with more Ease, what is regular, and remember it much better. Order pleases on this Account,

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and because it is a Character of what is beautiful and fine. Now, fince an infinite Intelligence, the fupreme Author of all Things, could make an infinite Number of Arrangements, different from those we are capable of conceiving, we must first apply ourselves to study his Works; and it is only after knowing them, that it is proper to fearch for what is beautiful. Nothing can be more ridiculous than this Reasoning on several Occasions. God has made Things in Order, therefore he has made them fuch as I am pleas'd to imagine them. We shall find however, if we think well of it, that this is the Source of numberless Chimera's, which we very feriously vent. In Divinity, as well as in Physicks, we imagine certain Systems, we give ourselves up to the Pleasure of adjusting the several Parts of them; and when they have once taken Poffession in our Mind, we force the Phenomena of Nature to agree to one, and the Passages of Scripture to suit the other. Instead of studying what God has done and faid, we suppose he has done and faid precifely, what we have fome Interest to believe he has,

Pullness of faulty.

IX. THO' the Mind ought ever to be Affectation of carrying on its Searches towards this Plenitude of Knowledge, yet some Care must be Knowledge, is taken not to affect it on every Occasion: It is highly necessary to know how to adapt

Matters to the Circumstances of Time, and of the Audience: A Man often does not instruct, because he will fay all; and to leave nothing unfaid, he touches each Article fo lightly, that they are not clearly understood, and his Hearers have not Time to comprehend distinctly what he fays, nor Power to retain it. He that pronounces a Discourse, ought to have much more at Heart to perfect and finish each Part of it, than to exhaust his Subject; one may be done, the other is often impossible; one Article exactly explain'd, and judiciously enlarg'd upon, ever produces its Effect; whereas the treating of too many at a Time, and flightly touching upon each, frequently leaves no Impression on the Heart, nor Idea in the Understandthat hire must likewide ing.

X. IT is a good Rule in this Cafe, to We must con- join the Reviewing of others to our own. fuls others, Objects have feveral Faces, and every Thing in Being contains a great Number of Attri-

butes and Properties. One Man therefore looks upon an Object on some one Side, and masters it on that Side; and another fixes his Attention on another Face of it: Thus it is with a Third, and a Fourth. Each iees only

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only one Part; but they all together may perceive the Whole. It is likewise a convincing Proof that we have hit the Mark, when, without having conferr'd together, or consulted the same Master, many have, each by himself, thought in the same Manner.

THE Benefit of Advice is prov'd by every Day's Experience; we pay dearly for the Pleasure of consulting no Person, and doing all Things by our private Impulse; but we may be sensible every Moment of the Fruit to be reap'd of consulting others, if we are willing to see, examine, and sollow it: But the same Experience also tells us, that we are loth to do it; it is too troublesome, and we avoid it.

IT is of the last Importance to get rid of this Aversion; let us feek its Caufes, in order to sap the Foundation The Rejecting of an Advice, gives us an advantagious Idea of ourselves; for in comparing ourselves with others, it pleafes us to find we excell: And we flatter ourfelves that we excell, when our Thoughts appear to us preferable to theirs. On the contrary, an Advice that corrects, or instructs us, reminds us of our Imperfection, and the Superiority of him who gives it. But that we may take it eafily and chearfully, let us allow that we are diseased; that we are born and live tull of Imperfections; and we shall be glad to find those Remedies that will cure us, and those Aids that may conduce to deliver us from our Imperfection. It is far more shameful to have Defects, and not to know them, than to take Notice of them fo as to get rid of them. How can he be a reasonable Man, who takes it ill that another should tell him of a Diforder, which he does not guard against himself? Wife and fincere Friends are the most valuable Treasures; but no Man is worthy to possess them, but in Proportion as he is willing to be inform'd.

I Am not surprized, that a Man of low Understanding, full of his own Merit, should find it painful to receive Advice: He is confined to a narrow Circle, in which he applauds himself; He is obliged to make Use of so great a Struggle, to see any Thing beyond it, that he persuades himself with extreme Delight, there is nothing out of his Circle worth observing: You give him great Trouble when you endeavour to rescue him from so Darling a Prejudice. But that a Man of more elevated Sense, ampler Views, and who loves every Day to see new Objects; who, by long Experience, is convinced, that every Year discovers some Things, which he never had the Attention to remark before; that, I say, a Man of Reason should take it ill to be informed, and invited to place himself in a new Point of

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View; this is what we could not believe, did not Experience put it beyond Dispute. Can the Vanity, the Fancy of owing all to one's felf, and as little as possible to another, pervert to fuch a Degree the Mind of a Man, that is a Lover

of Knowledge, and a Master of Reasoning?

WHEN we entertain a due Love for Truth, we love those that feek after it, and are pleas'd when they find it. A Man, whose Heart is thus dispos'd, loves all that would advise and affist him, by communicating any Light to, or delivering him from any Mistake; and how can we be uneafy at the Excelling of those we love, or wish them Ill. whom we receive Good from? How can we be difpleas'd at a Conquest, of which we reap the Fruits? Hippocrates acquir'd immortal Honour by his Care to improve himself by taking Advice, and arriv'd at the Merit of palfing for an Oracle; whereas, if Vanity had fill'd his Hear, instead of the Love of Truth, he would have had to anfwer for Abundance of Mistakes, his Disciples might, in Imitation of his Obstinacy, (11) have fallen into.

SOM E conclude, without Hesitation, when an Author thinks differently from them, that he thinks wrong; and therefore refuse their Attention to many Proofs, which they ought to embrace. A Man tinctur'd with School-Divinity, will call a plain Piece of Divinity, obscure: This is a Fact

I can testify.

there is nothing out of his

THE Aversion we have to profit by Advice, is a Proof, that Vanity has stifled the Love of Truth in the Hearts of Men; and yet it is but a mistaken Vanity, fince, to preferve the deceitful Pleasure of Self-conceit, a Man exposes himself daily to the Contempt of others. Now, who shews more Weakness, Levity, and Folly? He that honestly and ingenuously owns his Mistake, and forfakes it; or he whose Perverseness is such, that to have once given into a Sentiment, is with him an invincible Reason never to abandon

To be free from Error, to know all that is possible to be known, to owe all our Knowledge to ourselves, is a Perevond up thus he perluades

^{.0 (}u) It is fit, that new and bold Thoughts should be contested; they stand or fall by it, and we shall know what to keep to, Hist. de l' At. 1710. p. 43. 00 Was

⁽w) Non est levitas à cognito & damnato errore discedere; & ingenué fatendum est : Aliud putavi, deceptus fum. Hoc verò Stultitia perseverantia est: quod semel dixi, qualecunque fit, fixmm ratumque fit. Non est turpe cum re mutare Confilium Sen. de Benef. lib. IV. c. 38.

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fection above our Nature; so that if to be capable of high Attainments by one's own Strength and Light, attains the first Degree of Merit; then to know how, and to be willing to improve by the Advice and Assistance of others, is intitled to the Second, which is not very distant from the first. Moneri velle ac posse secunda Virtus.

A Man that wants Docility, and hates Advice, ought to be afraid of putting a Cheat upon his Probity: For how is he an honest Man, who had rather his Errors should pass to the latest Posterity, than see them remov'd by solid

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IF it be true, that it is more our Interest to rescue ourselves from an Evil, than others, every Man, who understands his Interest, and has it at Heart, that is, every reasonable Man, will have a greater Desire to profit by Advice, than to give it: He will ever listen to it out of Duty and Interest, and will impart it only when his Duty requires it of him.

ADVICE is not always painful to us, we fometimes court it with Passion. A Man, who never built, consults an Architect, or Mason. One, who is a Stranger to Agriculture, improves by the Directions of a Husbandman; but few care to be advis'd in the Matter of their Profession, which they value themselves upon; especially by a Person that professes the same.

OBSERVE With what an Air Painters and Musicians give the Hearing to one another, when Counsel is offer'd. A Physician had often rather bury his Patient, than find him cur'd by another. Advice is uneaty on a Point we know, and pretend to be skill'd in. Now, all Men pride themselves in being reasonable Creatures; every one flatters himself, that he thinks agreeably to good Sense: He readily yields to others, in Memory, Penetration, and Vivacity; but will own no Superior in Exactness of Understanding (x). Let us know ourselves better, and remember, that we are born in Ignorance, and have been bred up amidit Prejudices. A lucky Chance often discovers to this Man one Mistake, to that another, and the next Day still more to them both; so that he who will not inform and correct himself very often, is the Person only to be blam'd: But he, that will not profitby the Light which is held out to him by another, is void. of Excuse in his Obstinacy. On a live indemnity and any analysis

my Wextpedta, cum puerdem animum depofuerie, & te in viros

Philotophia transcripserit, Adinoc cann non paeritia in nobits, 166,

⁽x) Turpiter fit, quod in eo ipfo peccet, cujus profitetur Scientiam. Cic. Tuse. Quest. Lib. 11.

WE observe, in all Professions and Affairs, that when the Desire of Gain over-ballances that of Praise, and Avarice prevails over Vanity, we profit by Advice, and draw an Advantage from it, from what Mouth soever it comes. Let us therefore love the Truth above all Things, and we shall reject nothing that may contribute to make it plain to us.

LET us also confider, that this false Delicacy, this unreafonable Aversion to Advice, is a Relique of our Infancy. We contracted it in our Youth, as then commonly receiving it from a harsh and imperious, and, perhaps, severe Superior; and because it turn'd us, from the Amusements of Pleasure, to ferious Employments, that were not to our Tafte. So that from a Cuftom of hating to be advis'd on these frivolous Accounts, we are childish enough to hate it in itself, and to reject it, whatever it be, and from what Quarter foever it comes. But let us, like Men of Reason, attending to proper Advice, procure ourselves the Pleasure of finding, that we are got above the State of Childhood. Most of the Faults we commit in Matters of Advice, are certainly the Remains of Childhood (y). When an Old Man feeks Applause under that Name, or indulges himself the Pleasure of complaining and murmuring, if an Event does not answer his Defires, and the Counfels we give him; have we not Caufe to fay, that he relapses into the Weakness of Childhood?

Since Advice is so useful, they that give it, ought to do it in that Manner, that they may not appear to have a View of doing Honour to themselves by it. We may propose it to a Man under such a Form, that it should not seem so much an Instruction of what he is ignorant of, as a Help to recollect what he already knows, and how he might ap-

ply it to make a farther Progress.

To advise in a serviceable Manner, for the Good of others, does not only require some Dexterity, but it is the Business of a truly honest Man, who aims at nothing else but to benefit his Friend. It is frequently made the Pretence, when some would give the Loose to Vanity or ill Humour. We find many that are capable of receiving Good from Advise.

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⁽y) Tenes utique memoria, quantum senseris gaudium, cum prætexta posita sumpsisti virilem togam, & in forum deductus es : majus exspecta, cum puerilem animum deposueris, & te in viros Philosophia transcripserit, Adhuc enim non pueritia in nobis, sed, quod est gravius, puerilitas remanet; & hoc quidem pejus est, quod auctoritatem habemus senum, vitia puerorum: nec puerorum tantum, sed infantium. Sen. Ep. IV.

vice that is feafon'd with Friendship; but there are but

few, who will agree to the Justice of a Censure.

It were to be wish'd, that Men of Learning, who have got a Name, would not forget which Way they attain'd it. Continual Attention and Circumspection gave them a Justiness of Thinking; and by this Means, they have pleas'd, and acquir'd the Esteem of the Public. But doth this exempt them from being still circumspect and consulting with

other Persons; or are they therefore to take themselves for

Oracles?

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FE w love to impart fincere Advice. Most Men are backward to open their Hearts to others, even in Matters of Knowledge. What we know, we keep to ourselves, or wait for fome public Occasion to let others into a Share of it. We are not less covetous of our Sense, than of our Money; we do not care to put it out, but upon large Interest, and would be troubled, if others made a hand of it. But it is a gross Error to fear impoverishing ourselves, by enriching others; it proves quite the contrary. "Tis a great Means of encreasing in Knowledge, to instruct others; the Mind grows more vigorous and fertile, in Proportion as it employs itself. In communicating our Ideas to others, we make them more familiar to ourselves, and therefore more proper to give Birth to new Ideas. If this Refervedness and Precaution, this Silence, and Fear of informing others, were pardonable, it would only be in Men of the lowest Class in Literature; who having their principal Stock in their Memory, may justly fear it will foon be exhausted. But why should Men, who are sensible of their Strength, and know by Experience, they may, if they please, advance every Day, disgrace themselves by this childish Method, and fall into the Pufillanimity of School-Boys, who conceal their Books of Phrases very seriously from others; or of young Students, who wait an Occasion of publick Dispute, to produce to Light, an Argument they found in some rare Author, or that came by Chance into their Minds?

Charron delivers the following Rules to be observed in giving good Advice. 1. To have De la Sag. 13. a prudent Regard to Place and Time; for III. Ch. II.

you must not be a Disturber of a public Rejoycing, nor occasion Sadness, when it is a proper Season to
afford Help and Comfort. Crudelis in readversa objurgatio.
Damnare est objurgare, cum auxilio est opus. 2. Not to advise or reprove indifferently for all Faults. 3. Not to do it before Witnesses: A young Man was so mortisy'd at a Rebuke

of

of Pythagoras, that he went and hang'd himself. And Plutarch thinks, that Alexander flew his Friend Clitus for reprehending him before Company. 4. It should be done with a careless Freedom and Simplicity, without any particular Concern, or the least Emotion. 5. You should include your self in the Number of the Faulty, and make Use of general Terms, 6. You should begin with commending, and end with offering your Service and Affiftance; this very much softens the Keenness of a Reproof, and makes it go down more easily; one might say, such a Thing becomes you well, but such a Thing not altogether so well; there is a great deal of Difference between these Two, one could never imagine they proceeded from the same Person. 7. The Fault should be express'd in Words below the Measure of the Fault. 8. After the Admonition is finish'd, you should not break off abruptly, but go on to entertain him with other pleasant and ordinary Conversation.

IF you attend to the Thoughts of this Author, more than his Language (which is not to conformable to our prefent Standard) we shall find, that he very well consider'd this Matter: For Want of good Sense or true Friendship, Advice is apt to degenerate into Animofities and Quarrels, as it is in one of the Scenes of the Misantbrope. There are certain Posts in Society, that engage those who are advanc'd to them, to cenfure the Vitious. These Cenfures are a Kind of Chastisement, beneath the Scourge and the Prison; and as they are defign'd to mortify those to whom they are address'd, they who bestow them, be they never so little dispos'd to mortify others, and make them fenfible of their Preeminence, will be apt, by practifing these Censures, to lose the Taste of Politeness; and if an Expression be not extreamly hard, it will appear to those I speak of, sufficiently courteous and kind, provided it proceed out of their Mouths.



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HAP. IV.

Of Different Methods.



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HOUGH every Method, to deferve the Name of Good, ought to lead us the shortest Way, to a found Knowledge of as many Things as possible, and though these three Views be essential to all Methods, and agree to them in this,

yet do they often vary in other Respects, so that there are

more than one Kind of Methods.

I. It is certain, that a Method must vary Method Should according to the Nature of Subjects; and vary according that we ought not to treat of all Things to the Subjects.

in the same manner. Geometrical Truths would be less easy to be understood, and few Persons could trace them, if propos'd in a continu'd Connection of common Discourse. It would require so many separate and distinct Articles as there are Parts in a Demonstration. On the other hand, a Point of Morality, explain'd by a Series of Definitions, Theorems, and Problems, that are demonstrated one by one, would be an unnecessary Exactness, which would but betray an affected Nicety, and confound, not only the common People, but many above their Rank. Matters of continual Use ought to be treated in such an Order as is most suitable to the usual Forms.

M. Terraston remarks, in his Judicious Geometrician, That it is the Geometrical Spirit, not the Form, that

ought to influence all Kinds of Compositions.

In Matters where the Language may become equivocal, Error will flide in fo much the more eafily, as the Parts of a Reasoning are the more separated and detach'd by Lemma's, Theorems, and Corollaries. This Multitude and Diversity perplexes and distracts the Attention of the Mind. Perhaps, it would never have been introduc'd into the Mathematicks, but that its Parts were discover'd by little and little; it was easy to add a Corollary to a Proposition, and a Scholium to a Theorem. LET VOL. II.

LET Men attentively read, in the Metaphysics of Descartes, the same Matter written in the Form of a Demonstration, and afterwards reduced to a Geometrical Order; he will find it much easier to enter into his Thought by following him in his Meditation, than by taking what he says in Parts, in his separate Theorems. And supposing, that he reason'd justly, we should be more readily convinc'd of it by the first of these Methods; the Subtilty of the other will always leave an Understanding that has the least Dissidence, under some Apprehension. An Ambiguity may much easier slide in among those Parts that lie thus

loose without Connection.

THIS Great Man, after having given himself Leave to doubt, with the Scepticks, of all Things, has the Pleafure to recover himself out of this doubting State, and to be convinc'd that he thinks. That which thinks within him, he calls the Soul, of the Existence of which he is affured; and he calls that Extension, of which he yet doubts. Before he passes from this Assurance, he is willing to inform himself better about the Existence and the Nature of Thinking Beings; and his Relish for this Method makes him enquire into some Proofs of the Existence of God, the Strength of which has been contested, and which certainly give room to Evafions, and feem too abstracted to be taken hold of by any Mind that is not extremely me-taphyfically given: Yet fince he makes the Certainty of the Existence of Bodies to depend upon a Perswasion of the Existence of God, he takes from us, by this Method, the Proofs we draw from the Existence and Order of the Universe, to demonstrate the Existence of its Author. It deems he was too much a Slave to this Method.

THE Manner, in which the Rules of Syllogisms are demonstrated in the Art of Thinking, is altogether ingenious; it pleases by its Subtilty an Understanding that loves what puts it in Action: Yet true it is, that it embarrasses the Mind, and that these Citations of Axioms, Theorems, Corollaries, satigue the Understanding; and putting it to run from one Truth to another, in searching for the Proofs, the Proposition is lost out of Sight. A more ordinary Method might have made these very Proofs more con-

spicuous, and easier to be retained.

M. de Fontenelle often gives us, in his History of the Royal Academy of Sciences, several Dissertations, that have all the Force of the most Geometrical Demonstration,

PART IV. the Art of THINKING. 33

and, besides many other Graces, a great Clearness; much of which would be lost, were you to break them into separate Pieces, and cut them, as it were, into Theorems and Corollaries. See, for Instance, the Year 1702. p. 123, and 129.

A SYSTEM of Physicks, managed by Axioms, Definitions, Theorems, and Problems, would tire the Memory of the Reader, by these broken Pieces and Varieties.

A SUBJECT may be handled by Definitions, Axioms, and Lemma's, without imitating the Method of the Mathematicians any farther than the Skirts of it; and without imparting to it any more Clearness. M. Rohault, for

Example, is still clearer than M. Regis.

To acquire the Knowledge of Things necessary to be known, such as the Properties of Numbers and Figures, we need only to consult our Ideas, that infallibly represent them such as they are. When we would know our selves, we must in good Earnest confine our Thoughts within our selves; be conscious what we think and seel; and believe our selves in what we are conscious of, and feel; For it is only Thought that seels and perceives it self; and what does not so, is not a Thought. On the contrary, to know the Nature and Constitution of Bodies, we must go out of our selves, observe what passes, and be attentive to Experience.

I WILL not pursue these Observations; I do not here undertake to prescribe to Authors, or to regulate the Forms of composing in Morality, in Divinity, &c. I will not so much as propose my Thoughts upon it, as Doubts offer'd to the Judgment of the Learned, whose Leisure may be better employ'd, than to examine them, or to answer

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in the Schools, far from learning to vary is neglected. their Method, according to the Variety of Subjects, they study, on the contrary, to subject the Mind to Methods that are too uniform, and they press the Observation of a Round of Precepts even to Superstition. I use this metaphorical Expression, as including a very just Comparison: For, as the Superstitious depart from the Spirit of the Law, by a mistaken Attachment to the Letter, so some likewise depart from what is true and essential in Method, by a gross Observation of certain Rules, that indeed do sometimes assist us to proceed methodically. The great End of Method is to clear

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a Thing; to instruct solidly in many Things at once; and to avoid superstuous Lengths, and, by Consequence, Tautologies and Inconsistencies. Yet, if we be guided by certain Rules, and never depart from them, it often happens, that we may talk a great deal, without saying or unfolding almost any Thing at all: And then again, the little we say is so perplexed, that we tire the Reader by idle Circuits of Discourse, having neither Force nor Clear-

ness in them.

WHEN we have begun our Studies with Grammar, proceeded to Logic, and at last are come to Divinity, we think we find, in the Course of these Studies a Method for the Explication of all Texts. We begin with a Grammatical Explication of Words: After this, we consult Rhetoric, examine the Tropes and Figures; then we go into Philology, collecting what History and the Reading of the Antients afford useful or curious, and launch out into Allusions. This done, we scan the Words by a Logical Analysis, that reduces each Word to a common Place, a Cause, an Effect, an Adjunct, &c. At last we come to the Things themselves: And here having touched upon some Articles of positive Divinity, we enlarge on some controverted Points, and conclude, with a few morral Resections.

I own, we may draw some Affistance from all these Topicks, and improve by all these Helps; but it is not reasonable to employ all of them upon all forts of Subjects, much less always in this Order. The Words are often so clear, that without dwelling upon them, we ought to enter into the Nature of the Things they offer. When a Word is not equivocal, either by its own Perspicuity, or by its Situation in a Discourse, abounding with Evidence, why should you seek for Meanings in it, that do not offer themselves, or fatigue the Hearer with Fantalms of your own raising, and then set your self to deftroy them? Constant Use sometimes makes a figurative Expression as intelligible and clear as the most simple: Custom often has annexed to Words a Sense very different from that you would draw from their Etymology. Often, again, the Knowledge of the Thing it self decides whether the Sense be literal or figurative; and by Consequence, the Explication of the Thing it self ought then to go before the Reflections upon the Figure or Metaphor in which it is expressed. I have delivered elsewhere my Opinion on what is called, in the Schools, the Logical Analysis; and what I have here remark'd, joined to some following Observations, will abundantly shew, that we sometimes give the Name of Method to that which de-

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MEN of narrow Capacities value themselves on the Command of an Art, that affords a Scholar, who is as heavy as his Master, a Method to fill up, without Difficulty, and in a short Time, a certain Number of Pages. But a Discourse made up only of Pieces patch'd together, and borrow'd here and there, of some Remarks on the first or second Words, of begging the Question, Suppositions, imperfect Proofs, and Citations, all apply'd without either Choice, or Force, gives great Pain to Men of good Sense, as well as Scandal to Libertines, and Disorder to a Person of an humble and tender Conscience; who, finding nothing in it, that fastens the Attention, nothing that informs, or gives Nourishment to Piety, takes the Fault upon himself, and finks under illgrounded Remorfes. Only the Superstitious, who reckons a fitting of two Hours as so much paid to God, and difcharg'd upon what he owes him, is over and above well fatisfied with a Discourse, where he sees nothing that obliges him to change any Thing in himself, and whose general Ideas and imperfect Proofs he eludes, when they tend to some Conclusions that are not agreeable to him.

WE teach Children the Rules of Grammar in Verse; perhaps, it were better to teach them the same by Judgment: We likewise learn in Verse the principal Events of History; this is really a Matter of Memory, and Verses are a Relief to it. But to put in Verse the Rules of Arithmetick or Algebra, is the most ridiculous Way in the World: He who knows them very well by Heart, will yet practise them very ill; and he who knows the Sense of them, will have no occasion for the Assistance of Verse to retain them. When we join Consequences to Principles, we see clearly; when we pursue the Rules of Memory, and go by Rote, we advance blind-folded; we tie our selves to Signs and Words, that on many Occasions may be equivocal, and give room to Mis-

takes.

An Orator often proposes chiefly to win the Heart, and thereby to gain upon the Understanding. Another, who delights in Demonstrations, aims to come at the Heart, by first convincing the Understanding. The Style

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and Method of either will vary according to their Defigns.

Omission of be read so frequently, nor with so much Relish, were they written more methodically; all they contain might then be known, at once or twice reading them; after which there would be nothing new or entertaining in them. But it is necessary there should be both Brightness and solid Sense in every Part of a Work, which needs not be beholden, for its

Worth, to the manner of its Contrivance.

IV. Men of mean Parts are at a Lofs for Variety: After they have begun, may be, ten Sermons with a stroke of History, they will fetch all their Exordiums from thence, and begin their Complements so, as well as their Sermons. They must needs divide and subdivide the most simple Matters; and Questions, though never so clear in themselves, will be proposed in a Light, that will make five or six preliminary Remarks unavoidable to come to the Sense of them. Their Conversation will have the same Tone, with as many Prolixities and Repetitions

five or fix preliminary Remarks unavoidable to come to the Sense of them. Their Conversation will have the same Tone, with as many Prolixities and Repetitions as the Lessons they dictate to their Scholars; ever pleasant or dull, ever admiring or ready to contradict, as Humour or Custom shall lead. They are always jejune or swelling on every Subject; Slaves to their Habits, and uncapable to accommodate themselves to Circumstances. If they have been Travellers, it will be enough that some idle Persons have seemed a little pleased with the Account of their Adventures, to make them relate all over again eternally, from one End to the other. You are forced to set out with them, whether you will or no, and follow them all the Way, 'till they return.

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Of the Order in which we should conduct our Thoughts, to improve in Knowledge.

HEN a Subject is compounded, Transitions. to get an exact Knowledge
of it, you must know its Parts, and the Connection of them. Now to form a just Idea of the Parts, it is necessary to fix the Attention upon each separately, and

not to confound or distract the Mind by taking them all into one View. But in attending thus entirely to each fingle Part, is it not to be feared we should set too narrow Bounds to our Knowledge, and that many Things may escape our Enquiries? Method will provide against it; there is a certain Way of confidering Things, whereby they are brought to our Eyes one after another; and the Understanding, when accustomed to it, is render'd just, as well as pregnant.

II. THERE is a Method to be observed, Three Mewhether we instruct our selves or others, or thods. would improve by the Instruction of others.

These three Methods have some Agreement and Diversity.

III. HE that would have the Pleasure of The Method informing himself upon any Question, or of informing finds himself obliged to draw all his Light our selves. from himself, for want of Assistance on the Subjects he would know, ought to begin with a clear and exact stating of the Question in all its Circumstances, and attend well to the Parts that compose it, in order to separate and study each of them abstractedly. In an attentive Review of the Parts, if any one appears more simple than the others, he must begin with it first, and try to discover the Nature of it, especially if he suspects, much more if he believes and fees that the other Parts depend

upon, and may receive Light from it. When he has gained a clear Notion of it, he must make himself familiar with it, and express it in the clearest Terms possible, attending withal to the Relation that some other Parts, less known may bear to that which is thus already display'd. What is unknown will cease to be so by Degrees, if you thus compare it with what is known; and these Relations will

unfold and explain it.

WE come gradually to the Discovery, and the full Knowledge of an obscure Subject, by the Helps already proposed for finding the middle Idea, which, compared with the Subject and Attribute of a Proposition, ought to form a Reasoning; that is, it is useful to excite and follicit the natural Fertility of the Mind, by putting the Question to it, What must I know, to see clearly the Nature of this Subject? Do I find nothing, the evident Knowledge whereof may diffipate the Obscurity I am under? By this Means, he will rife to the View of a fecond Thing, which being manifestly known, will ascertain the To know this second, he seeks, by a like Method, some Light in a third; and so by Degrees he comes to the Principles that are felf-evident. Then, descending again, by the same Steps, from one Light to another, he arrives at a full and perfect Explication of the Subject in hand. If the Principle is the fifth Thing he came up to, he must first apply it to the fourth; this will enlighten the third, and the third the fecond, and the fecond will discover the first; which is the Sum and End of the Enquiry.

IV. I have the Curiofity, for instance, to discover, how Colours appear through a Prism. An Instance. I take one, and hold it to the Rays of Light, and turning it several Ways, I observe all the Circumstances in which the several Colours are or are not produced. The Observation of all these Circumstances will qualify me to propose my Questions with greater Clear-I enquire then, what Change is wrought in a Column of Light, which, after its Passage through the Prism, is furrounded with some shady Obscurity, and by this means, inflead of a leffer Brightness, it produces a Violet and a Blue Colour in that Place where it darts on this Obscurity, a Yellow and a Red as it withdraws from the Shadow. This is the State of the principal Ques-Kleet it he believes and fees that the other Parts

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In this Question, I find several Parts to study upon: The Matter of the Prism, its Light, the Passage of the Light.

the Shadow, and the Nature of the Colours.

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I EASILY perceive that all here depends, in the main. upon the Light; and we must begin with establishing fairly the Nature of it, which will let us also into the Knowledge of the Nature of Shades, or the Privation of it. It is Light that is transformed into Colours. The Difference between a transparent and an opake Body, arises from a certain Relation which the Transparent has, and the Opake has not to the Light. The Passage of the Light cannot be rightly known, while you are unacquainted with the Nature of that Light that traverses the Glass. I know not the whole, but something of the Nature of Light, when I set about to study the Discovery of it; I have some Notion of the Sense and Signification of this Word, and I cannot proceed in this Enquiry any farther, but by the Help of what I already know: And if I know nothing concerning Light, I can discover nothing about it. Now, what do I know about Light? It is this, That a luminous Body produces in me a certain Sensation, which I readily perceive and eafily diffinguish from every other Thought, and from all that is not that very Senfation. What remains to be known, is, In what manner the Light acts to produce that Sensation. I must therefore compare the luminous Body, and the Sensation. What is that in me which perceives this Senfation? It is that which thinks. How does a luminous Body act upon that which thinks? Why, continuing my Search, I find that the Author of the Universe has appointed certain Motions to produce certain Manners of Thinking: The luminous Body, therefore, acts by a Motion it produces in the Eye. When I examine my felf to find some Proofs of this Opinion, I recollect, that every strong Light causes a Pain; and that a more violent one will burn: That a Concussion in the Eye, either by internal or external Causes, creates the Senfation of Light. All this affures me, that it springs from an Impression that shakes the Bottom of the Eye.

If a luminous Body imprints a Motion, it must have a Motion; and what is that? How are the Motions of Bodies discover'd? By the Eyes, in certain Subjects, and in certain Circumstances; in others, by Conjectures, founded upon some visible Effects, and necessary Consequences of them. Therefore I draw near to a Candle, and I see the Matter that supplies it boil and whirl rapidly at the

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Bottom of the Flame; I ask my felf, What is the Effect of fuch a whirling? And remember it is a circular Pushing or Whirling-about on all fides. This is the Action of Light, each Point of which is feen in any Position of

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the Eye that looks upon it.

AFTER I am thus come, by several Questions, to an Affurance, that the little Vertices of a luminous Body press upon the Right-lines of a Matter extremely moveable, and proper to pierce as far as the Bottom of the Eye, I pass on to examine what happens to the Lines as they pass the Prism, and I find they are turned out of their Way. On this, I ask my felf, What Variation a Line bent short, produces in Motion? And answer, It should become less vigorous. Is this enough? and does a bare Diminution of Force produce a blue or a yellow Colour? I make some Experiments, and find it does not: Colours do not arife, without the Neighbourhood of Shade. What does the Shade oppose to the Light? Some Parts that are less agitated. And what do the Bodies in Motion, when they firike upon others that are less moved? They whirl around. I proceed, and find, that the Violet should have more Rotation, and less Dartings, than the Blue; that the Yellow has more Dartings, and less Rotation, than the Red; for that which only glances upon the agitated Shade, and turns about to the luminous Column, where the Motion is more lively, whirls about less, and darts with more Vigour; whilst that, which is thrown upon the Shade, hits the Darkness with one of its Sides, and being with the other in a Column, which presses it against the Darkness, whirls round more rapidly, and darts with less Vigour. misino-

Here I have, on the one hand, a Change wrought upon the Motion of Light, by diminishing the Velocity of its Darting, and increasing the Rapidity of its Whirling; and these blended in various Degrees. On the other hand, this known Circumstance has a Relation to the Colours that are produced by it; and by this Means, these Colours come to be known themselves. In short, to get an Asfurance about this Idea, I ask my felf, Whether I have no Experiments to prove, that a fimple Change, in the Motion of Light, transforms it into Colour? And I remember, that after having been dazzled by the Lustre of the Sun, I perceive successively on the Walls of the Chamber I go into, first, a bright Image, then a reddish one, another inclining to blue, &c. But this Instance has been fuf-

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fufficiently enlarged upon to clear the Practice of these Rules. It is enough, that it points out a Method, and we must not, under the Pretence of an Example, insert whole

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he fays of the V. WHEN a Subject is very much com-pounded, we are not always happy enough to guess what Part is most proper to begin with, or will reflect the greatest Light upon the rest. We must therefore run the Hazard of some Conjectures, and try Experiments; and to succeed the better in them, we must not too hastily forsake the first Road we have enter'd. nor obstinately persist in it, so as never to take a different Path. Whatever Obstacles we encounter, we must keep at an equal Distance from Impatience and Obstinacy, and not imagine, the Difficulties arise from the Subject it felf, and are so inseparable from it, that we shall always find them alike in every Method.

WHEN we are come to an Habit of studying in Order, of proceeding always from simple to compound Ideas, and are neither led by Vanity nor a false Curiofity to study such Subjects, and resolve those Questions, whose Principles are as yet unknown to us, we shall not be so much in the Dark, nor exposed to the Perplexity of changing our Method every Moment, or the Temptation of never quitting that we have once enter'd upon, to fave our felves the Mortification of beginning all again, and condemning

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finall not intrade open nothing but with this Sp Aurhors our owalVno. A. A. H. Dibute to them for

conditions what they really ideas and Views as are d Of the Method of Studying.

I. HEY who take no Pleasure We must put in Reading, read for that very T Reason with Distraction, and offen do not understand what they read. On the other hand,

Questions to our selves in

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they who are paffionately fond of it, read so hastily, that fome Things escape them, and they do not allow them-selves Time to make Advantage of others. It would

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be useful, therefore, when we set about to study any Book, to ask our selves at the End of each Period. Whether we understand the Author's Meaning in it? What he says of the Subject in hand? What he affirms, or denies? How he proves either, by fuch and fuch Reasonings? And what new Affirmation, or Confirmation of the Proof he advanced, doth the following Part contain? When you have taken the Sense of these Proofs, you must examine the Force and Justness of them by the Rules we have given in speaking of Arguments. There are so few who know how to improve by their Reading, and so many ignorant of what they have read, even whilst they are about it, or a little while after, that the Necessity of these Directions, which might feem and should be superfluous, is grounded upon Faults that are almost universal.

An happy and

II. HAVING read two or three Volumes with this Exactness, or spent some Months ensy Method of in this Practice, we shall be able to dis-Reading flows tinguish in a Period, the Subject treated upfrom this. on, what is faid of it, and the Proofs alblodw ledged for it, with a Dispatch that cannot be

'express'd; and it will be with this Manner of studying, as it is when we learn to read: At first, we must have Time to represent each Letter to us, and to remember the Force and Use of it; then to join the Letters into Syllables, and the Syllables into Words; then to use our selves to stop without Slowness, and to hasten without Precipita-tion. But in a short Time we shall read correctly, almost without minding the Form of the Characters, or at

least without attending to them.

IF we make it a Law, and get a Habit betimes to read nothing but with this Spirit, we shall not intrude upon Authors our own Vhoughts, nor attribute to them such Ideas and Views as are different from what they really have. But many read with a Defign to meet with what they defire, by looking for what is not to be found; they do not see what there is, and think they really find there what they looked for. We take to this Taste in reading the Poets'; and keep to it in studying the Scriptures. But he that reads with these Precautions will not attribute to Authors different Opinions from what they have; because, as he proceed by Steps, he will ascribe nothing to them but what is impossible not to observe in them; he will not decide upon obscure Passages, and fo avoid making them contradictory to each other. It,

If, in short, he cannot escape a Conviction, that they affirm and deny the same Thing in several Places; he will resect, that they wrote at several Times, and left some Things uncorrected; he will dwell upon those Passages that are more labour'd, where an Author is calm, and treats expressly on the Subject we doubt of; and will, on the whole, preser the last Compositions.

THE Learned and Famous Logician, (a) Claubergius, has had the Courage to determine, in some Precepts, the Difference between an honest Reader, and one that is ad-

dicted to Cenfure and Calumny.

I HAVE drawn the following Rules, with some Ad-

ditions, out of his Logic.

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I. WHEN an honest Reader takes a Book in Hand, with a Design to reap some Advantage by it, he is far from reading it only or principally with a View to play

the Critic, or to injure the Writer.

2. HE does not read it hastily, nor dip here and there into it, and then judge of it, after thus tearing it into Fragments; he connects the Parts of it, and considers them in the whole, and in the reciprocal Light they cast upon one another.

3. WHAT appears to be clear and reasonable, he marks carefully, and employs it to unfold what is obscure,

doubtful, and equivocal.

4. HE suspends his Judgment, where he meets with difficult Places, not affording a very determinate Sense; and promises himself, that the Sequel may offer him some Hints to disentangle them.

5. He informs himfelf, as far as possible, of the Character of the Author, and compares his Way of Living with

his Way of Speaking.

6. HE compares between themselves, the different Parts of the same Work, and the different Works of the same Hand: He avoids, as far as he can, the making an Author

⁽a) Ut sensus Oratoris inveniatur, primò habenda est ratio Auctoris loquentis; — deinde, ad quem Sermo dirigatur — Materia, — Animus — Lingua — Stylus loquentis videndum an & quomodò seipsum Scriptor interpretetur; bonus interpres unius desectum alterius persectione corrigit; Calumniator pejora arripit, neglectis melioribus — A Contradictione, quantum sieri potest, liberandus. Sensus ei non tribuendus quam suum esse negat, nisi aliis Argumentis convincatur. Factis quoque verba sua declarat. Claub. Log. P. III.

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thor contradict himself; and for this Purpose, he distinguishes the literal, from the figurative Style, and considers fairly and attentively, where the one or the other is the most suitably apply'd, and forms a Style the most capable of being received. Authors write for Readers thus dispos'd.

7. HE must consider, whether an Author wrote for Persons of mean Capacities, as the Catechisms, for instance; or, whether it appears from the Subject of his Work, that he intended it for such as ought to be qua-

lified for the Instruction or Managing of others.

8. A READER who is not prejudiced, and understands Logic, judges of the Intention of an Author, and of the Sense that should be given to his Words, by the Nature of the Things themselves upon which the Discourse turns.

THESE Rules are so plain, that they seem useless to alledge, since none can be ignorant of them, yet every one does not practise them; and as superfluous as they seem, I would rather hazard the writing of something that is superfluous, than condemn my self, for having suppressed

a necessary Rule.

A SEDATE Mind observes, without Pain, the Rules of judging well, nay, it has often no Occasion for them; it follows them naturally without having learned them; While, on the contrary, Passions make even those forget them, who have inculcated them upon others. When a Dispute grows warm between such Persons, as the Vulgar call Learned, because they pretend to Books and Literature, they reproach one another every Moment with being misunderstood. What must we do to avoid Faults so common? The following Rules may be of Use for

that Purpose.

Prejudice against an Author: The more unjust the Passions are, the more the Heart of Man is inclined to disguize them to it self. But this is a tender Point; sooner or later it will be discovered by others to our Shame, and by God to our Condemnation. The most sacred Pretences ought to be suspected: There was a Time, when St. Paul, by assed like many other Doctors of the Synagogue, stattered himself, that his Zeal was pleasing to God, in declaring himself an Enemy of Jesus Christ. There are a thousand Ways to find out the Agitations of an Heart, that is afraid to perceive it self. With what Tone do you pro-

pronounce the Name of an Author? or love that others should pronounce it? Do you pass over the most frivolous Reasons unexamin'd, if they be against him? And are you Proof to the most solid ones, when they tend to justify him? Are you fond of dwelling upon the Good you find in him? Does his Reputation never make you change Colour, or the Good that is said of him, raise your Impatience?

2. If this be so, you must stay till all these Emotions vanish, before you pronounce upon his Works; there are so many other Books to employ your self upon. A Judge, who sears God, and has a Sense of Honour and Conscience, will not give Sentence when he finds an Aversion to one of the Parties, or is but, on some Grounds,

suspected of it.

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3. IF you read to instruct your self, your Passion ought not to hinder you from taking those Instructions that will encrease your Knowledge. It you defire to reclaim an Author from his Errors, whose Opinions you disapprove, you must shew Sentiments of Amity, Esteem, and Tendernels for him, that will sweeten your Expressions, and make you ingenious to win his Attention, and find the Way to his Heart. And when without any Regard to him, (fuch as one Man effentially owes to another,) you have no other View but to stop the Course of his Errors, and keep others from giving in to them; confider that your Care will be so much the more effectual upon all Persons that have good Sense and Probity, as you appear less liable to be suspected, and that your Expressions and Conduct will most furely tell Mankind, that Passion had no Share in your Enquiry.

4. BE wise at the Expence of another: Improve upon so many Examples, antient and modern, how many learned Men have disgraced themselves by their warm Disputes, which their Passion has overspread with Darkness. To combat an Adversary, you impute some Opinions to him, which he does not maintain; and instead of falling upon him, you fall upon a Phantom of your own erecting. How many Men of Sense and Gensus have rendered themselves ridiculous, and a Gazing-stock? They have led a few into their Prejudices, and they triumph in their Applauses: But a Writer should always reslect, that People yet unborn will be his Judges, on whom the Names and Engagements of the small Circle of his Votaries will have

no Influence.

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You should imitate the Conduct of a wife and honest Advocate, who not only finds out such Reasons as might beit please a Party, which is prejudiced, and embraces without examining all that appears favourable to it; but he alledges nothing that is not proper to stop the Mouth of a cunning Adversary, or to convince a circumfpect, scrupulous, and an incredulous Judge, and even to bring back a Judge, that has been prepoffessed. Instead of faying in his Heart, this Reason will divert the Enemies of my Antagonist, he ought to ask himself, of what Weight will it appear to his Defendants? They will scan, and view it on all sides, can they find no Flaw in

it, and turn it to their Advantage? 6. A GOOD Man, that is surprised in any Kind of indirect Dealing, will be ashamed of it in the Sight of God, and condemn himself with bitter Regret for it, and think on nothing more than of repairing his Fault: He improves these judicious Motions to read now again with Calmness, what he read before with Prejudice; he dwells on the Passages that appear good to him; he animates himself to fet a Value upon them, employs them to clear up those that seemed to be faulty; he confers with the Author, writes to him, proposes his Doubts, and defires him to fatisfy them. 'T is to be hoped, that Things will at last come to this pass; they are approaching to it by Degrees, for the Party of Barbarism is every Day de-

clining.

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WHEN we pass over no Word, without examining the Force of it, we often meet with some that have the Value of an entire Proposition, and contain the Proofs of those in which they are set. This is the Use of well-apply'd Epithets; for when they neither serve to remove an equivocal Sense, nor extend or perfect an Idea, nor prove a Truth, they are meer Expletives, that only amuse an attentive Man, and turn him out of his Road. These useless Epithets are one of the strongest Proofs of the want of Taste of those that employ them; they render their Discourses ridiculous, while they endeavour to make them pompous. Some think a Discourse, like a Man of Quality, cannot appear in its Grandeur without an Equipage; and therefore they always place an Adjective to wait upon a Substantive.

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III. THE Custom of letting a Proof go unexamin'd, and putting off the Examination of a dangerous
it till the whole Chapter be read over, or till Habit.

the fecond Reading of the whole Work, is eafily form'd into a bad Habit; for it has two very natural Foundations, Impatience and Laziness. Now what we thus delay, we feldom accomplish at all: But if so much Circumspection be requir'd, we shall advance but little? Say rather, that if we use less, we shall not advance at all; for the Progress made in Uncertainty is no Progress at all: He only makes a real Progress, who gets Knowledge and Certainty. Now without Examination, there is no true Knowledge; that alone distinguishes Truth from Falshood. Besides, the same Matters come about again; and what we examine to-day in the reading of one Book, we shall find ready discuss'd to our Hands tomorrow, when we read the fame Thing in another Au-Thus we shall have no need to continue the severe Examination, but when we meet with new Mat-

IV. THE Necessity of Examining, is greater than Order.

that of Studying in Order. Most young Men that have an Inclination for Reading, read indifferently all that falls in their Way, and use Books, as others do Diver-sions, Snuff-Boxes, Dress, or any Amusements in general; they never have enough of them, and their Novelty is their greatest Charm. Studies so ill regulated produce nothing but Confusion, Uncertainty, Conceit; and this is, I think, one Reason of the little Exactness and Clearness we find in the Understandings of many learned Men. Therefore I would have a Man always finish one fort of Reading, before he begins another; or, if he will engage in two forts of Studies, he should have a care that one do not injure the other; and for this Purpose, I would advise young Men not to undertake two Studies at once, that require each of them an Examination. We may, for Instance, study a Language, History, a Poet; and as these only fill the Memory, it is proper to join some other to them, that requires more Attention and Examination, left we confirm our felves in an ill Habit of never reasoning at all. Besides, when we charge the Memory too much, it retains the less; and a second Reading, if too large, effaces part of the former. To those Studies that only employ this Faculty, it is therefore proper to join the Study of some Science; and to that which requires Discussion VOL. II.

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and Examination, we may likewise add the Study of the Mathematicks, which clears the Mind, exercises the Judgment, and forms the Reason, without any Mixture of Darkness, or Uncertainty. Variety well managed, is a kind of Relief, and gives the Mind Extent and Force.

WHEN we are obliged by certain Circumstances to study many Things at the same Time, which we cannot examine into, as it often happens in Universities and Academies, especially in our Travels, we must have the Precaution to hear every Thing historically, and be content to form clear Ideas of the Opinions of those we consult. and the different Turns of Thinking we observe in Men of Letters, and others with whom we are to converse, and lay them up in our Memory: One thinks thus on a Subject; another thus, on a different Point. The Spirit, the Style, the Manners of this or that Man have such or fuch a Character: The Examination of Opinions, and Reflection upon Characters, must be deferr'd till we have more Leisure to order our Studies with greater Advantage, In the mean time, it is best to suspend our Judgment; for whenever we decide upon Things which we have not Leifure to examine thoroughly, we run the Rifque of being mistaken; to which a wise Man will never expose himfelf.

ORDER is likewise necessary in every Study: In Logics, Physics, Ethics, you should begin with such Works as begin themselves with Principles that suppose nothing; that do not refer the Proofs of what they advance, to the Sequel of the Work; that do not treat of Matters in a tumultuary Way; that go by Steps, from the Simple to the Compound; and whose Order is easily seen and retained. You should make every Article samiliar to you, before you pass to the sollowing: You should comprehend all the Articles of a former Chapter, and make the Sense, the Consequences, and Proofs of it very samiliar to your self, before you undertake the reading of a second. You should do the same with an entire Section, as you do with a single Chapter.

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To be certain that you proceed exactly, it would be proper to write as you read, that is, abridge the Article whose Sense and Proofs you would know and examine. The Examination of each Article should be first attended by this Manner of Writing; but when by Exercise you have gained a little more Strength and Facility, you may

then read over whole Chapters, and abridge them at once, joining your own Reflections to those of your Author.

V. IT often happens, that we flatter our The Advantage felves with having entirely mastered, what we only understand by Halves, and have of Writing. only very general and imperfect Ideas of:

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But we recover from this Mistake, when we try to express it in Writing; we find our selves entangled, and obliged to think a fecond Time of it. Besides, in producing the Thoughts we at first borrow'd from another, but have made our own by Confideration, we form our selves to invent also, and to produce new Ideas. should make a Tryal of this acquir'd Force, when we are a little more advanc'd; and after having cast our Eyes on the Subject of the Article written in the Margin, we should endeavour to handle it our selves, and compare our Thoughts with the Author's: Afterwards, we may venture to consider a whole Chapter, the Summary of which we have read; and then go on without any other Help but the plain Title of the Subject that is handled.

I HAVE often remarked in young People, that too great an Ardour to learn, has retarded their Progress, and sometimes brought them to nothing at all: They perfectly devour a Book, and let flip what they have already learned through their Eagerness to know more; they often quit a Work before they have read it half, because they do not find in it all they looked for. In a Word, they follow no Rule in their Studies, but their Zeal, and the Chance that brings a Book into their Hands; there is nothing but Confusion in their Minds as well as their Conduct: To improve and to hurry are Contradictions. Immorari oportet, si velis aliquid trahere, quod animo fideliter sedeat.

V. AFTER having examined fome Articles apart, we must take care to recol-Recapitulations.

lect them, in order to see the Dependance of them. The Authors who fave their Readers this Trouble, do them no small Service; for the greatest Part of Readers are so carelels, that they do not care to recapitulate what they have read, if they do not find it done to their Hands: These require a great Art; it is not easy to please in repeating the same Things: Yet a Recapitulation ought not to have any Thing new, by this Means it would become obscure, it would fatigue instead of reheving; and what is new would be lost in the Crowd

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VI. FEW Persons study with Order, or read with a Spirit that delights to examine: Some ill Effects Most attend only to that which hits their of Reading. Prejudices; fo they draw but little Advantage from their Reading; which, far from enlarging their Minds, on the contrary, contracts them more and more every Day. All they read is a new Occasion to confirm them in their Humour and Prejudices; and as they do not read, but only to condemn all that is opposite to their Maxims, they do not, by Reading, form themselves at all to converse with other Men: You must absolutely think as they do, or elfe you are insupportable to them. By this Means, a thousand new Discoveries are debarr'd from entering the Mind, that might continually enrich it. We despise the Gold, because we must seek for it in dark Mines, where much Earth is mingled with it. In all the Actions of Men, good and bad are ever blended together; and there is nothing so miserable, in which there is not fome Good amidst a greater Quantity of Evil: But befides, we are not infallible; and what differs from our Maxims may often be much better; but Prejudice will hinder us from observing it. A very perplexed Method often gives us no Pain, because we are entirely accustom'd to it, while another, that is much more simple and sure. appears tiresome to us, because we do not know it, and

I REMEMBER, that a young Preacher, being to handle the Subject of Conscience, and willing to give his Auditors some useful Ideas on so important a Subject, preferred some Principles of common Sense to the Jargon of the Schools, from which he drew a Train of Consequences very plain, and yet sufficient to clear his Subject. An old Doctor that heard him, provoked at his new Method, would not give his Attention to the Preacher. He did not understand him, because he would not understand him; and the very Clearness of his Discourse was the Cause that he called it dark and unintelligible. Thus it

is when Custom takes Place of Reason.

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VII. WHEN we have made one Course of Study familiar to us: Whether the Author treats of all the Objects of his System, Stud

The Method of pursuing our Studies.

or omits some; whether he carries his Enquiries far, or confines them; if we distinguish well between what is true and false, certain and uncertain, demonstrative and probable, we may, when we read other Treatises on the same Science, supply what was omitted, or forgot, extend what was too much bounded, confirm what was doubtful: And by this Method we shall daily enlarge the Course we have begun, and add new Readings to the former without Confusion.

If the first System, we have studied in any Science, be compleat, both in the Number of Matters, and the Order of them, it may serve for a Basis to all our future Notions on the same Subject: As we advance, and discover more, we may easily add it to perfect our first Plan. But if our first System be imperfect, or confused, we should study

another, or compose one our selves.

THE different Things we read on the same Subject in different Books, either turn upon the same Hypotheles, or flow from Principles entirely of another Nature. When what you read is founded upon an Hypothesis of which you are already convinced, it is sufficient to be attentive, 1. To the Turns that set a Truth, or the Proof of one, in a clearer Light. 2. To the Examination of new Proofs. 3. To the Discussion of some particular Cases, in which the Author takes a new Road, without forfaking the Main of the System, and Hypothesis, he holds in common with those from whom he differs in this Particular. But when, in the Pursuit of your Studies, you light upon a Book, whose Principles are entirely different from those to which you have been at first attached, you ought to begin, with divefting your felf of all Prejudice, to read with the same Spirit, as a Judge ought to hear the Informations of one Party, after having heard those of the other. If by Chance you be miltaken in the first System you have studied, this new Reading, with a Spirit free from Prejudice, will serve to undeceive you; and when so unprejudiced an Examination does not cause you to alter your Opinion, you abide with much greater Affurance in that you had before, and are also better qualified to shew to others the Foible of a Work, which you have examined with an unbyaffed Mind.

WHEN you meet with a Work, whose Principles or Method is foreign to what we have hitherto approved, you must not begin with the Examination of the Defects that may possibly be in them; that would be too foon, and Prejudice might have too large a Share in your Cenfure: You must read it with the same Spirit, as if it was the first you perused upon that Subject: You must lay hold on all the Ideas of the Author, follow him in all his Walks and Manners of Thinking, and even in his Irregularities: You must, in short, know in what Manner he thinks, before you can decide whether he can think better. You will draw many Advantages from this Method; you will learn to know Men, and enter into the different Genius and Characters of them; and certainly, no Knowledge is more useful. This Study has its Pleafure as well as Profit; it is a kind of travelling into the Minds of Men: And the Diversity of their Tastes, their Turns and Characters, is not less agreeable in the Survey, than that of Lands, Towns, and Customs. A Man must be flock'd with very little Sense, and be very fond of losing his Time, if in his Travels he will not vouchfafe to fix his Eyes, but on what he finds, here and there, like that in his own Country; and if he will not enter into any Town or House, but to remark in it what may differ from that where he was educated.

AFTER having once read in this Manner an entire Work, whose Ideas are different from ours, it would be proper to read it over a second Time, that you may enrich your first System with the Remarks you have made, whether in the first, or in the second of these Readings: For Truths may be found among Errors, and a slight Transformation often changes an Error into a judicious Opinion; add, retrench, correct something, and of a salse Opinion you will make a just one. Besides, the Mistakes of Celebrated Authors should have their Place in a compleat System; for it seems, that the Proofs which establish a Truth, will receive a new Lustre by the Resu

tation of the contrary Errors.

M. LE CLERK observes very judiciously, as it is his common Way, That it would be service-Bibl. Ant. & able to the Commonwealth of Letters, Mod. Tom. III. if they who are capable of enriching it, had always some Author in hand to illustrate; because they make their Reading more useful, when they have thus a Subject in their Minds,

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y 1 to which they may reduce all they meet with, that is proper to clear it. Some well-ordered Systems, as we have propos'd, may serve for the same End; if you do not lose Sight of them, in your Reading and Meditating, you will find every Moment something to enrich and perfect them.

VIII. A Celebrated Logician advises, to Remarks upon read a Book three Times: 1. You run it a certain Advice, remarking its Plan, and the Depen-vice.

over, remarking its Plan, and the Dependance of the Parts. 2. You read it with

more Attention, Step by Step, and let nothing pass without a severe Examination. 3. You perform your Reading more expeditiously; and if you stop, it is only upon the Style, the Turns, and, in a Word, upon the exterior Parts of it.

IT is natural to think, that this learned Man really advifed others what he commonly practifed himself. A Lover of Reading can hardly refrain in that of a new Book, of giving himfelf up to his Warmth and Curiofity; he goes through it in a Breath, and from the very Pleasure he finds in it, he is in haste to finish it. fhort, he reads, as he has been accustom'd to read Plays' and Romances; but fince he is convinc'd, that he has not edified much by this first Reading, he tees he must correct this Precipitation in a second: Yet he may posfibly be prejudiced in the first. Every Author has his favourite Hypotheles, and certain Principles, which he often repeats, and fets every Moment again before the Eyes of the Reader: Having let them go unexamin'd, he is at any Time very ready to receive them; and by making this Compliment to them, he finds himself at last preposfessed by them. We have already observed, that what becomes thus familiar by Repetition and Habit, imposes upon us, and causes it self to be received as true.

It is therefore the better and surer Method, to be severe in the first Reading. After having examin'd two Articles separately, we mind attentively the Connection of them; then we examine the Truth of a third Part; then we remark, whether it be well plac'd, in Consequence of the two others, and so of the rest. But since the Mind of Man is easily consounded with Diversity and Multitude, we should first attend to Things themselves, and the Truth of them; and to the Style, on the second

Reading.

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WHEN the Name of an Author is celebrated; and to follow him from the Principles he rifes to, down through every Detail by which he descends, not only much Patience and Attention, but likewise Penetration and Extent of Mind is required; we make it a Merit to understand him. and value our felves upon the Skill of laying hold on his Ideas: But fince it would be mortifying to take all this Pains in vain, after some Fatigue to comprehend our Author, we often dispense with the Examination thereof: Willing to enjoy the Fruits of our Labours, we agree to all his hard Theorems, and allow him every Confequence. We are often more difficult in receiving a Truth after much Enquiry, than in yielding to Proofs that are very much embarraffed; and there have been Instances, that an Hypothesis has gained many Advocates by its Obscurity: Had the Author expressed himself more clearly, he would have been opposed more vigorously.

Method to form a Style, if you be ignorant of a Language, you must necessarily begin with the Declension of Nouns and Verbs; then go on to the undeclinable

Words, and exactly remember the Sense and Force of them, whether they be distributed in a Discourse, or be compounded with other Words, Nouns or Verbs. And fince they have often many Significations, you must endeavour to find out one upon which all the rest depend;

and so you will more easily retain them.

AFTER this, you must learn the Rules of Construction, which may be reduced to a small Number, if you bring a Variety of particular Cases under one general Head. It is likewise of Importance to reduce the Anomelies to Rules, and to know, that those which appear to be disagreeable to the Rules, are yet, in Effect, conformable to them.

AFTER the Undeclinable, other Words should be learned, beginning with the Primitives of more frequent Use, deducing the Derivatives from them, and join them to form the Compound: And when you have stock'd your Memory with a moderate Quantity of Words, the rest may be learned by Use; first, by Translation, then by Composition: For it is certain, that Things help to retain Words, and the Place they have in a Discourse often discovers the Signification of them.

X. You will polifh your Style, by fe-Directions for parating from the principal, the accessory Ideas annexed to certain Terms more than others; and by this you will justly know the Occasions on which it is proper to employ them: Besides this, you must penetrate into the Genius of a Tongue; each Language having its peculiar Characters, which sometimes vary with Time: One has a prolix, another a concife Style; one leaves you room to guess, the other lays all open to you; one is adorn'd with Particles, the other rejects all unnecessary Ornaments. The Latin Tongue loves Transpositions, the French avoids them: Passive Phrases are common in the Latin, the French turn them commonly into Active. Compound Words give a great Force to the Greek Tongue, but the French rejects them, as well as Transpositions and all Licenses, nay, all Varieties too, not springing naturally out of the Thoughts, and offering themselves. All that deviates from a certain Road seems to be affected, and is insupportable.

THE Beauty of Style does not only depend upon the right Choice and Ranging of Words suitable to good Sense, and the Nature of the Tongue; but chiefly, methinks, upon the Beauty of the Thoughts. We love to read an Author that thinks justly and nobly, and expresses

himself as he thinks,

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WE love a Brevity, that does not impair the Evidence of a Thing, or fatigue the Attention. We express our selves proper and concise, when we are Masters of our Subject, the Dependance and Connection of all its Parts, and have the Precaution to place that always before, which should give Light to the Sequel of the Discourse: Iu Order to get a Habit of it, we should have in our View a Reader, whose Ease we would consult, and save him, as far as possible, the Fatigue arising from Obscurity and indirect Methods of Writing. This kind of Clearness is accompanied with Force, and, according to the Nature of the Subjects, with Delicacy, when the little we say is confined within just Bounds, and the Reader comprehends with Ease, what some important Reasons did not allow us to express.

GRANDEUR, Elevation, and Pomp, depend upon the Subjects we treat of; such as are worthy to be expressed in Terms, whose accessory Ideas have the greatest Dignity; and to be embellish'd with Metaphors and Fi-

gures.

THERE are some Things to be expressed simply, without dwelling upon them; the Mind is satisfied with a single View of them, and would be disgusted, if it was obliged to pass them over again: But there are some Things more beautiful, which we love to dwell upon; these we must trace more than once: But when we present the same Ideas, we must vary the Turns; and the Beauty of the second, must excell those of the first: The Style of them likewise should be closer; for what has been already sufficiently explained, is understood by a Hint.

As the Beauty of Style is a Quality we are sensible of, and the Expressions of our Sentiments which we use are mostly general and equivocal, we need not be surprised, if the Elogies of Just, Noble, Fine, Pompous, Elegant, &c. are not always well determined. Does not the Nobleness of Style (of which we have spoken) consist in an uncommon Way of Expression? If this extraordinary Way be affected, it is ridiculous; but if, without a View of distinguishing our selves, we bend all our Attention to think justly, to know Things compleatly, to discover the secret Principles, and the nicest Dissernces of them, and divide their Relations well; and if we express our Ideas accordingly, we shall speak better than others, because we shall think better.

WE are sensible, I said, of the Excellency of a Style; but because our Sentiments easily impose upon us, it is proper, when we are well acquainted with the Thoughts of an Author, to find out the Characters that render his Style agreeable; which will at the same Time discover the Causes of that which is displeasing, and be a great Help to avoid the Faults of one, as well as to imitate the Beau-

ties of the other.

When we have an Excellent Author in hand, after having mastered one of his Thoughts, we must meditate upon it, and make our selves familiar with it; then try to put it in Writing, compare with it what we have composed our selves, respect upon the Differences of these two Compositions, find out the Desects, and examine the Reason. When we are farther advanc'd, we still read those Authors that have thought well, but neglected their Style; and after we have discover'd their Impersections, and the Causes of them, we shall try to repair them, and express what they said with greater Justness, Clearness, and Elegance, than they have done themselves. We may likewise follow

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follow this Method in perusing the Authors who have been well receiv'd in their Time, but whose Style is 'no longer in use: We may say, it is the Translation of an Author into the very Tongue he us'd. By this we shall open a Way to translate an Author from one Tongue into another, and transsuse into that we use our selves the Beauties of foreign Tongues, as far as their different Genius will permit.

XI. As for Paraphrases, they are condemn'd of Paranot only by an Authority which will not be phrases. contested in Point of Eloquence, i. e. Cicero,

but likewise by the Reason upon which he grounds his Opinion. (b) An excellent Author, says he, has chosen Words and Turns the most suitable to his Thought; and by the Manner in which he has put together his Expressions, from heing common, as they were, he makes them so proper to himtels, by the Arrangement that he has given them, that it may seem they were purely invented to serve his Design. But instead of making a Style so chosen familiar to us, that we may be capable of speaking equally well on all Subjects, we satigue our selves, and spoil the Imagination, in order to say the same Thing differently, viz. worse.

WE must read with great Attention the Books that excel in Justiness and Beauty of Style: We must read them over frequently, dwell upon each Period; and after that, run thro', in one Pursuit, what we have thus admir'd separately. The Imagination does, as it were, take a Tincture from the

Books

⁽b) In quotidianis autem cogitationibus equidem mihi adolescentulus proponere solebam illam exercitationem maxime, qua C. Carbonem, nostrum illum inimicum, solitum esse uti sciebam, ut aut verfibus propositis quam maxime gravibus, aut oratione aliqua lecta ad eum finem, quem memorià possem comprehendere, eam rem ipiam, quam legissem, verbis aliis quam maxime possem lectis pronunciarem. Sed post animadverti hoc esse in hoc vitii, quod ea verba quæ maximè cujusque rei propria, quæque essent ornatissima atque optima, occupaffet aut Ennius, si ad ejus versus me exercerem, aut Gracchus, si ejus orationem mihi forte proposuissem: ita si iisdem verbis uterer, nihil prodesse; si aliis, etiam obesse, cum minus idoneis uti consuescerem, Posteà mihi placuit, eoque sum usus adolescens, ut iummorum oratorum Græcas orationes explicarem, quibus lectis hoc assequebar, ut cum ea, quæ legerem Græcè, Latine redderem, non solum optimis verbis uterer, & tamen usitatis, sed etiam exprimerem quædam verba imitando, quæ nova nostris essent, dummodà csient idonea. Cic. de Orat. Lib. I.

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Books we read in this Manner: It enters into the Spirit of their Authors, and becomes fruitful in the like Productions. Nothing that does not refemble the Images that have made to deep Impressions upon it, appears to be Sterling to it: It acquires a good Taste, and soon discerns what is valuable: The Terms and Turns that are not conformable to this good Taste, displease as soon as they are presented to it: They vanish away as soon as they are born, and others are look'd for; and after having been often rejected, they present themselves no more. A Habit of dwelling only on what is good, puts it in a happy Impotence of saying any

Thing that is not fo.

XII. HENCE the Method of the Schools The ill Method of forming Youth to Eloquence is to be difof the Schools. approv'd; which I think has a contrary Effect, and looks as a Contrivance of no Use. Before the Minds of Youth are form'd by any Science, before you have given them any Taste of Evidence, Justness, or Demonstration, you set them to compose on Subjects they do not know at all, or but very confusedly; whose Principles they have not studied, and about which they only begin to inform themselves, when they attempt to handle them. We propose some dry Thoughts to them, which they are to enlarge upon; and with what can they fill them but Wind, fince they are ignorant of Things, and not form'd to-Medi-These Exercises ennure them to loose general Ideas, to Confusion, Precipitancy, and to be content with all that comes before them. Many who are confirm'd in these Habits cannot get rid of them: Their Letters of Compliment, of Condolence, &c. are roving, and affect no Body, because they are equally fram'd for all the World.

The Fountain of Eloquence.

XIII. It is the Thoughts themselves that are the Basis of Eloquence: It is the Manner of Thinking that creates the Beauty of Style. It is a gross Error to make it depend either entirely or principally upon the Expressions and Turns (c).

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⁽c) Ii qui bene dicunt, adferunt propriam, compositam orationem, & ornatam, & artificio quodam & expolitione distinctam. Hæc autem oratio, si res non subest, ab Oratore percepta & cognita, aut uulla sit, necesse est, aut omnium irrisione ludatur. Quid est enim tam furiosum, qu'am verborum vel optimorum atque ornatissimorum sonitus inanis, nulla subjecta sententia vel scientia? Cic. de Orat. Lib. I.

Whether you would instruct or move, these Effects are owing to the Things which the Words fignify, not to the Words themselves. What Tully says of Fear, in particular, ought to be extended to all other Paffions: Ex rebus timiditas, non ex vocabulis nascitur; " They arise from "Things, not from Words." There is no Elegance in a low Thought, nor Elevation in a false one; the Subject must be equal to the Ornaments you give it: A Dwarf would be still more ridiculous in the Dress of a Giant; and when I fee Men pronouncing the meanest Things with an Air of Pomp and Emphasis, methinks, I see so many counterfeit Shapes, pretending to shine in borrow'd Habits, that are made for all forts of Persons; or so many dry old Women, who endeavour to hide their Wrinkles, by a Heap of Ornaments, that would be scarce pardonable in a young Beauty.

IT is only those who know not how to think, that give to some pompous and nicely-marshall'd Expressions, the Praises due only to just Sentiments conducted and pursued

in a proper Manner (d).

THE Perfection of Eloquence confifts in getting fo far the Mastery of the Dispositions of your Audience, and in fixing their Attention so well on the Things you represent to them, that they need hardly think on any Thing else but to approve of the Person who instructs them so use-

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HENCE it is that true Rhetoric is founded upon Logic. You must begin with learning to think well; after which it will be the easier to learn how to express your Thoughts suitably. And I'do not doubt, but that one Cause of the little Exactness you find in most Discourses, arises only from having accustom'd our selves, at first, to make the Beauty of them depend upon the Words they are expressed by, and from bestowing all our Attention on them. But if a Painter had form'd an extravagant Design, the Beauty of the Colours, and the exact Delineation of each Part, far from concealing

Cum omnis ex re atque verbis constet oratio, neque verba sedem habere possunt, si rem subtraxeris: neque res lumen, si verba submoveris. Lib. III.

⁽d) Prima specie admirationem, re explicata risum movent. Cie. de Fin. Lib. IV.

⁽e) Oratoris nocet eloquentia si non rerum sed sui faciat cupiditatem. Cic.

concealing its Ridiculousness, would rather encrease it. They who make the Beauty of Eloquence depend only up. on Words and Phrases, are as much mistaken, as those who would make the Beauty of a Dance depend upon Habits and Masks: This does not impose upon any but gross People, who neither understand Musick nor Cadence.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Method of Teaching.

ted on the Way of instructing our selves.



them, it is manifelt that he who has learn'd it as he ought, cannot follow in Teaching a more useful Method, than that which he took in informing himfelf.

HENCE it is, that they who have had the Misfortune to study under Masters of an obscure, confus'd, embarrass'd Way of Thinking, who fatigued them by their wild Lengths and Digreffions, ought not to use that Method with their Scholars, that has been us'd with them. For fince we cannor reasonably affure our selves of what we have learn'd under such Masters, till we have trac'd it over again in better Order, it must be this Order we should follow in teaching others.

WE are likewise often liable to Distractions and Elopements in Thinking. While we are informing our felves, we grope in the Dark, frequently make false Steps, and a vain Effort; our Imagination often takes a Flight from the true Subject, to others that are something related to it, yet, in the main, very different. However, we must not lead those we direct thro' all these Windings, but only in such Roads and Reflections as have really clear'd and advanc'd our own Understandings.

Not that it is improper to give them Notice of these Digressions, since the best Genius is often slung out of the shortest PART IV. the Art of THINKING. 367

shortest Way, and apt to swerve, who may take Advantage of these Deviations, to recover their Path by them: I love to see the Progress that an Author has made on an obscure Subject. The samous Mr. Boyle is exact in each petty Circumstance of what he attempted in vain, as well as what he master'd; and these are not the least valuable Parts of his Works to a Man who seriously applies himself to Philosophy, M. Homberg likewise often gives us, in his Memoirs, Informations of this Nature.

II. THE truest Way is to conduct those The Profit of you teach in such a Manner, that they may this Method.

be able to inform themselves. It is the greatest

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Talent of a Teacher to place his Scholar in fuch Points of View, from whence he may perceive himself all that he is to know. If you give him Principles, the Consequences of which he may draw himself, he looks upon these Principles, he so easily comprehends, as his own; and does not think the Consequences less his, because he himself deduces them.

As they who are thus instructed, owe, in some Measure, their Notions to themselves, as having seen and discover'd them themselves, they regard this Learning as their own proper Work, and become more fond of it. We look upon our own Productions with Pleasure, which recompence all the Fatigue we undergo in our Search and Study. One that is sensible of his Strength, is pleas'd to make use of it.

What we know, not only by Reading, but by diligent Search and serious Examination, we make our own, and possess it as such: We connect it with the rest of our Knowledge, and transform it into our Nature. Thus indeed Nature her self works a Change upon our Nourishment; and the Bees form their Honey from the Juices they collect, but which they themselves digest (e).

WE

⁽f) Cum ab aliis quæsita cognovero, tum & de inventis judicem, & cogitem de inveniendis. Alit lectio ingenium, & studio fatigatum, non sine studio tamen, resicit. Nec scribere tantum, nec tantum legere debemus; altera res contristabit, & vires exhauriet: de stilo dico, altera solvet ac diluet. Invicem hoc illo commutandum est, & alterum altero temperandum: ut quicquid lectione collectum est, stilus redigat in corpus. Apes, ut aiunt, debemus imitari, quæ vagantur, & slores ad mel faciendum idoneos carpunt: deinde quicquid attulere, disponunt, ac per savos digerunt. - - - Nos quo-

THE common Way of Teaching conduces only to fill the Memory with Notions; and happy is it for the Scholars when their Masters are in the Right; but it contributes nothing to a Justness, Force, or Penetration of the Mind. A Science thus acquir'd, is perfectly foreign to him who possesses it; but he who learns to search and discover Things, and does it himself, is enrich'd by his own proper Fund; and this Fund so cultivated is doubly fruitful, in Proportion to its Produce. One who knows only by Memory, has a very narrow Knowledge, and is foon confounded, when he will carry it beyond certain Limits (g); but the Knowledge of the other is without Bounds: He can add Light to Light without End; he can never exhaust himself, because he learns without ceasing, and differs as much from the other, as a Man who is rich, because his Coffers are full, from one who can make Gold himself, and so can renew his Treasures as often as he pleases, and make them inexhaustible. The good Method of Teaching, at the same Time that it enriches the Mind with new Knowledge, perfects the Faculties, and gives them Justness and Fertility.

IF

que apes debemus imitari, & quæcunque ex diversa lectione congessimus, separare; meliùs enim distincta servantur. Deinde adhibità ingenii nostri cura & facultate, in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confundere: ut etiam si apparuerit unde sumptum sit, aliud tamen esse, quam undè sumptum est, appareat; quod in corpore nostro videmus, sine ulla opera nostra, facere naturam. Alimenta quæ accepimus, quandiu in sua qualitate perdurant, & solida innatant stomacho, onera sunt: at cum ex eo quod erant, mutata sunt, tunc demum in vires & in sanguinem transcunt: Idem in his, quibus aluntur ingenia, præstemus: ut quæcunque hausimus, non patiamur integra esse, me aliena sint. Concoquamus illa: alioquin in memoriam ibunt, non in ingenium. Assentiamur illis sideliter, & nostra faciamus, ut unum quiddam siat ex multis. Sen. Ep. LXXXIV.

" (g) "I had rather frame my Understanding, than furnish it. Read"ing serves me to cut out Work for my Judgment, not my Me"mory." Mont. B. III. Ch, 3. In which he pronounces against

bimself.

IF the Authors of Systems, fill'd with Paradoxes and Nonfense, would let us know how they came by their Opinions we should easily discover where and how they wander'd from the Truth. The Synthetical Way exposes their Sentiments to Mistake. Spinosa is an Instance of this in his Morality.

III. To teach by this Method, that Order must Rules.

be follow'd which I have fo often recommended.

You must suppose nothing, but begin with what is simple. and proceed to compounded Matters by little and little. and by fuch Connections as are extremely evident and familiar, before you pass to others. The Mind, thus inform'd by what went before, will eafily dispel the Obscurity of what immediately follows.

By this Method, the State of the Question will not be perplex'd; it will state it self. And this distinct Stating of it, is an effential Preliminary to make a Scholar capable of fearching and finding out by himself the Explication

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You should likewise sollicit and excite his Genius, by proper Questions put to him in such a Manner, that he may only chuse either the Affirmative or the Negative; then take the Side, he has chosen, for a Principle, and ask him, whether in attending to it, and looking for some Relation in it to the present Question, he does not see a Consequence arife, that will give Light to what he would know. You should make him reason on some other Subject that is plainer, or better known, and more familiar, and make him pursue the same Train of Reasoning on it as before. He may be reminded of some preceding Lessons, where he may find fome Helps and Directions. In short, as his Genius is more or less enlarg'd, a greater or lesser Part of that Reasoning he himself ought to make, may be display'd, requiring him to finish the rest.

To form Youth to resolve Questions themselves, you must exercise them first upon simple Questions, and make them examine and resolve them, with the same Care, as if they were the most compounded and difficult: But you must take heed not to keep up this Habit; for it is a kind of Scaffolding, that is not always to continue; and this Method must only be follow'd in Questions that are really difficult. Preachers will treat of every Thing in an equal Extent.

This is a great Abuse,

IV. This Method, which is renown'd for the Use that Socrates and his Disciples made of it, has been wholly neglected in the Schools, and only mention'd as a Dream. M. Le Clerc seems desirous to revive it, instead of all that Trash of Argumentation and Syllogisms. We will, in Imitation of him, here give an Instance of it.

I WOULD bring a Defender of Atoms to renounce his Opinion. After having defin'd the Terms, and settled the State of the Question, I engage him in this Conversation.

D. CANNOT you raise two Perpendiculars upon the two extreme Points of a Line compos'd of a determinate Number of Atoms?

R. I CANNOT dispute this Supposition.

D. LET us raise each Perpendicular 100 Atoms high, and suppose 50 to be the Length of the Line on the Extremities of which they fall.

R. I AGREE to it.

D. CANNOT you conceive between these two Perpendiculars 100 Lines equal to one another, and parallel to this Line on the Extremities of which they are rais'd?

R. THIS is plain.

D. But if you draw two Lines obliquely between these two Perpendiculars, and join their Extremities in the highest of these 100 Parallels, so as to make an Equicrural Triangle, will not every one of these Parallels become shorter than the other?

R. THEY necessarily will.

D. WILL the first that touches immediately the Base of the Triangle be equally shorten'd on both Sides? And how much do you think, at least, it will be shorten'd?

R. It cannot be shorten'd less than a Point on each Side,

fince there is nothing smaller than a Point.

D. Therefore will it have no more than 48 Atoms in Length?

R. CERTAINLY.

D. But the second, which I set upon this first, will it be also shorter by two Points?

R. THAT is clearly prov'd, and each must be shorter by

two Points than that upon which it is fet.

D. As then the first is 50 Atoms long wanting 2, that is, 48; and the second is 48 wanting 2, and 50 wanting 4, that is, 46; the tenth will be 50 wanting 20, that is, 30; the twentieth 50 wanting 40, that is, 10, the twenty-fourth 50 abating 48, that is, 2.

R. ALL

R. ALL this follows by a necessary Consequece.

D. Bur the twenty-fifth, which should be shorter by one Point on each Side than the twenty-fourth, which is it self reduc'd to two Points, what Length will it be of? And yet from it there are still twenty five to be drawn, all less one than another.

R. I AM at a stand.

D. Run over all we have laid down, and all we have concluded, you will manifestly see that all must be affirm'd, if you maintain the Notion of Atoms. This is the only Proposition you are at Liberty to retract.

R. I SEE very well that I must give it up, because it

leads fo palpably to a Contradiction.

V. D. WHENCE is it that you will not Another Inagree to any Proposition? ftance.

R. IT is because I find none that is cer-

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D. AND what is there wanting in all?

R. THE Character of Truth.

D. WHAT is that Character?

R. I KNOW nothing of it,

D. HAVE you ever been curious enough to know it?

R. I own I never yet gave my self the Trouble.

D. THEN your Ignorance has not yet disturbed you?

R. No.

D. But is it true, that you are easy in this universal Uncertainty, and that you hug your self in it?

R. This is my Tafte.

D. Your Taste is very strange; but perhaps you rally with me, and think quite otherwise than you speak.

R. Excuse me, I speak very fincerely.

D. You are therefore conscious of this Taste; you believe that it is a Taste, but are you not at the same time conscious that you think?

R. THO' I should own this, what would the Conces-

fion fignify to you?

D. It shall be as you please: But if you will apply your Attention, you will, perhaps, discover by Degrees, amidst a great Number of Propositions, the same Character as in this, My TASTE IS TO DOUBT; which, in short, has determin'd you to make an Acknowledgment, and to agree to something.

HEAD AND DESCRIPTION OF THE OWNER PROPERTY OF THE WAR HOLD

Bb 2 VI. D. You

VI. D. You fay then, that at the Bottom we-have no Liberty at all; and that this Word is only the Name of an Appearance?

R. This is my Opinion.

D. But have you any Reason to think so?

R. WHAT a Question is that?

D. I MEAN, have you convincing Reasons?

R. I SHOULD not give my Assent without them. D. But what do you call a convincing Reason?

R. It is a Proof we cannot help yielding to, when we have once understood the Sense of it.

D. And do you think that they, on the other Side of the

Question, have not likewise convincing Reasons?

R. I think not; for if mine be solid, theirs can be only

weak, and meerly probable.

D. Do you imagine then it would be in their Power not to yield to them?

R. WITHOUT doubt; for we may always refuse our

Affent to a Proof that is not demonstrative.

D. You give up your Principle; for if all Men be Machines, and, at every Instant, necessarily determin'd to do what they do; since they who believe a Liberty, assent to Reasons they think they have for it, they are, according to you, under a Necessity of doing it; and when they find them convincing, they are necessarily determin'd to find them such; they cannot think otherwise, on this very Account, because they think so. But allow me to ask you one Question more: Do you think it is of use to Mankind to perswade themselves that they have no Liberty?

R. I HAVE not thought much of that; and I do not

disturb my self about the Interest of another.

D. AND if any Man should happen to say, that your Opinion is infinitely pernicious, and that you ought to be look'd upon as a publick Pest, to be destroy'd as a Monster that owns neither Law nor Virtue, and, by Consequence, has not that which it is essential to a Man to have, in order to be qualify'd for living like a Man, and in Society with others.

R. I SHOULD fay, that he who would compel others to think like himself, and use them ill when they think otherwise, is a Tyrant, who usurps a sovereign Authority

over his Equals.

D. But if we have no Liberty, we have no Obligation, are subject to no Law, nor oblig'd to remember that other Men are our Equals; and if we find it proper to put them

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in a State of Dependance, we do nothing but what is in our Power, nothing for which we ought to reproach our selves. Whoever acts thus is a Machine, that, in the Circumstances he is in, cannot do otherwise.

R. BE it so: But he is a Machine very incommodious to others; so that if they should offer to tear it in Pieces,

it would be no Wonder.

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D. AND do not you see that they, whose Ideas are contrary to yours, will say, it is you who are the dangerous Machine, and the Fireship that ought to be speedily sunk, lest it should occasion an universal Conslagration? You your self, had you led me into your Opinion, would, perhaps, have given the first Proof, that it is fatal to Mankind. As soon as I should think my self a Machine, I should give a Loose, without Struggle or Reslection, to my own Fancies: I should be in some Circumstances, where my Interest and Pleasure should invite me to injure you.

R. This would make you odious to me, and forfeit all

Share in my good Offices.

D. But if my Machine was determin'd, to love nothing but in Relation to it self; and if the Service, I should do my self in deceiving you, should be more agreeable than all I could expect from a Considence, that, according to your Principles, is only the Effect of Chance, and the blind Motions of the Machine, nothing should engage me to make you the least Sacrifice.

R. You do not confider, that to be a happy Machine, it is necessary for other Machines to be perswaded, that you are determin'd to be agreeable to them, without which they

will be determin'd to hurt and destroy you.

D. What can I do? Such as I find my self, I must be; and if, by a happy Organization, I am necessitated to be cunning and formidable, I shall make all others serve my Interests, and they will find themselves oblig'd to keep fair with me. Happy are they who are in Circumstances that set their Machines to a dextrous Manner of deceiving others, and keeping them in Awe. If we are necessarily determin'd to a Desire of Happiness, we are necessarily determin'd to propose this End to our selves. But give me, I beg of you, some farther Light: I will endeavour to reason only upon your Principles; I will throw aside all the Ideas of Law, Obligation, and Virtue, that trouble you; I will consine my self, with you, to look upon what they call good Men, as Machines commodious to others. This granted, you will readily allow, that such as Lycurgus, Solon, Pho-

Bb 3

cion, Numa, Brutus, Camillus, Fabius, Marcus Aurelius, William Tel, the Prince of Orange, &c. were Machines very useful to their Country, and fortunately born for their own Glory.

R. IT is exactly thus that I apprehend these Things.

D. HAVE you ever reflected upon the Causes that might have wound up these Machines to a Power of procuring so great Advantages to their Country?

R. I THINK these Causes may be reduc'd to Temper

and Education.

D. You think then that the Principles in which we are brought up, the Instructions we receive in our Infancy, the Examples with which we are furrounded, in a Word, the Ideas with which we are fill'd, wind up the Machine, which they call the Soul of Men, in a certain Manner that determines it to devote it felf to the Good of another.

R. Thus every Naturalist of good Sense should reason.

D. I DEMAND no more to conclude, That a Man, prepossed with the Thought that we have a Sovereign Master; that this Adorable Master has given important Laws to us; that nothing is greater or better than to make a right Use of our Liberty, according to the Intentions of the Author of the Universe; that a Man, I say, perswaded of these Maxims, is a Machine happily dispos'd for the Good of others: Whereas they who neither acknowledge Law, nor Virtue, nor Vice, and beyond this Life expect no Reward, and fear no Punishment; who are only sensible of their present Interests; are Machines very irregular with respect to the common Good, and upon which we cannot depend. Thus Error would be very beneficial to Mankind, and the Knowledge of Truth as dangerous. Now these are Imaginations which I cannot avoid looking upon as Dreams; and therefore I think, that they who, upon these Grounds, say they have no Liberty, do it because their Liberty is dormant and lifeless within them, as it commonly is with all Men while they fleep and dream.

IT is after this Method that we may engage a Person to difabuse himself. We allow his false Hypothesis, and oblige him to draw Consequences from it, or to own those we infer, till we come to one so manifestly absurd, that he can't digest it. From the last, which he is forc'd to reject, we go up to the last but one, from which it necessarily flow'd, and which he rejects in the same Manner. the same with the preceeding; and going thus from Step to

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PART IV. the Art of THINKING.

Step, he finds himself at last under a Necessity of retracting

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VII. WHETHER you do thus by Way of Dialogue, or in a continued Discourse, tho easy, is negnething is more easy, than to explain a Subject to others, which you have master'd your

felf, in the very Order in which it ought to be display'd; this, I say, is easy to one who has form'd a Habit of discovering the Truth, and of unravelling obscure Questions.

YET this Method is very little follow'd: Perhaps they who are capable of it, find it too long; perhaps some of them do not think it proper thus to lay open all their Art and Ability: We conceive a greater Admiration for a Dilcovery, when we do not know by what way we came to it. In short, there are many who pretend to write and to infruct, whose entire Learning is only a Contexture of Rhapsodies: As soon as they have heard some Masters, and read fome Books, they fill their Memories and their Papers: Thus becoming learned Men, in collecting by Degrees what Chance has brought to their Hands, Advance of Years, and Favour, has metamorphos'd them from Scholars to Masters. In these Posts of Honour they teach as they have been taught; Arguments fall from their Pens, and drop from their Mouths, without their being able to guess which Way they enter'd their Understandings.

VIII. WHEN a Man studies only with a Defects in Defign of Teaching some Time or other, Teachers. and making a Trade of it, he feldom studies in the Manner he ought to inform himself, and to be capable of instructing others. He is more desirous to pass for a learned Man, than to be so; he applies himself much more to speak easily, than to think justly; and he is less concern'd to find the Truth, than to defend well that which passes for true, and is in Fashion. He looks on himself as encompassed with Scholars, over whom he thinks to domineer; and he strives more to be capable of amuling and astonishing, than of instructing them. We must at first learn to think for our felves, and feek after Knowledge for our felves only, and be content with nothing that does not convince and fatisfy (b). It will afterwards be easy to con-B b 4 vey

⁽h) Non est quod timeas ne operam perdideris si tibi didicisti. Sen. Ep. VII.

vey reasonable Sentiments into others, when you your self

have thoroughly imbib'd them.

IX. WHEN we are accustomed to de-We improve monstrate Truths already known, in the our selves in fame Order, as we should endeavour to Teaching. instruct our felves in them, if we had not

as yet discover'd them, we are confirm'd in a good Habit of cutting off all Prejudices; we forget who hold the Affirmative, and who take the negative Side; we put in

practice the wife Maxim of St. Augustin, Ep. a Man. " Let none of us flatter himself that he has Ch. 11. n. 2. " already found the Truth; let us feek after " it by Agreement, as if we were entire-& Ch. III. " ly ignorant of it: We may feek it with

"Zeal and Union of Heart, if we do not presume that we have already discover'd it." Nothing is more rational or important than this Maxim; yet it is fo much neglected, and so many Persons make it a pious Duty to neglect it, that we are in no less Danger of offending grave Men, than the common People, when, in proposing it, we have not the Precaution to put our felves under the Protection of some Authority.

THEY who dispute often, see each of them some Part of the Subject on which their Controversy turns; they both may have some Light of Truth, but it is lost in the Warmth of the Dispute; and they reciprocally hinder one another from adding the Knowledge of what is obscure, to what

they know already.

X. But it is in vain to fill the Memory Love your with all the Rules we must follow, to teach Scholars. fuccessfully. We shall always speak without Success, when we have not very clear Ideas of what we speak, and have not made them very familiar to us. The Repetition, indeed, of the same Thing may easily fatigue us; and we can feldom well discharge what is tirefome: But this will be prevented, if a Man loves his Duty and his Scholars; this will engage him to study them, that he may adapt himself to their Capacity and Taste when it is good, and rectify it by Degrees when it is otherwife. Besides, it will keep us from teaching them any Thing which it is not of Importance for them to know. This is a Maxim not at all observ'd. Pedants are Machines that manage all which comes under their Hands in the same Manner: Shut up (as they are) in a Circle of Definitions, Divisions, Subdivisions, out of which they cannot escape,

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ot e, escape, their Disciples must get into it, and turn round in it with them. They have no other Method but what serves to make an ignorant Preacher talk on an Hour or more upon a Subject he does not understand; all their Disciples must go through it; and were they destin'd to a Throne, they must study every Thing as if they propos'd no other End than to preach ill, or to trisle over the Disputes of the Schools.

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CHAP. VIII.

Of the Analytic and Synthetic Methods.

I. HAT Method has been call'd Definitions.

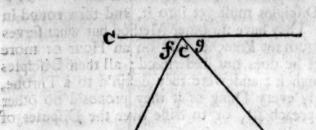
Analytic, which in teaching

follows the very Order of Invention; and the opposite Method has receiv'd the Name of Synthetic. That is also called Analytic.

which, to clear a Question, draws its first Light from the Question it self, and rises by Degrees to the Discovery of the Principles that solve it; but the Synthetic lays hold at first on certain Principles different from the Question it self, and which it did not give Birth to, but were however provided for that Purpose. As our Notions ascend from certain particular Objects to general Maxims and Propositions, the ascending from Particulars to Generals is likewise called Analytic, and the descending from the Generals to the Particulars, Synthetic. Not but that general Questions may also be resolved by the Analytic, as well as particular ones by the Synthetic Way: But the antient Schools obscur'd all that came into their Hands, and fill'd every Thing with equivocal Terms.

II. THE Difference of these two Methods Examples.

am to prove by Synthesis that the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two Right ones, I draw at the Angle c a Line Parallel to the Base b, d, and say, the three Angles f, c, g,



are equal to two Right ones, now the two Angles f and g are equal to their alternate Angles b and d; therefore, fubstituting Equal to Equal, I conclude, that the three Angles b, c, d, are equal to two Right Angles. You see, that in this Demonstration, I make use of Principles found out before, and foreign to a Triangle; for the Line which was drawn Parallel to the Base b, d, does not belong to the Triangle.

Now, if I would come to the fame Conclusion by the Analytic Way, I ask my felf, 1. What is a Right Angle? 2. What is the Quantity of two Right ones? 3. What is a Triangle? 4. I attend to the Generation of

a Triangle, and to the most simple Pofition of two Lines upon the Extremities of a third, and find it to be the Perpendicular Position, because it is the least varied; therefore the two Angles b, and d, will be Right Angles.

This done, I incline the Line d, f, towards b, to form the Triangle b, d, c. In this Triangle I perceive that the Angle b, remains a Right Angle; and the Angle

d, grows fo much less than a Right Angle, as the Part c, d, f, comes to: If therefore the new Angle c, be found equal to the Part c, d, f, it will follow that the Angle b, d, c, and the Angle c, will have between them the Quantity of a Right Angle: And this is what I am to enquire.

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To discover it, I recollect the Definition of an Angle, that it is made by the Aperture of two Lines; and I consider that Angles are equal, when the Lines that form them are equally open, or equally inclin'd: Therefore, all I have to do, is to see whether the Inclination of the

two Lines that form the Angle b, c, d, be equal, to the

Inclination of those that form the Angle c, d, f.

This I readily comprehend; for the Line d, c, being a Right Line, is equally inclined in all its Points; the two Lines b, c, d, f, both perpendicular, are equally inclining to it: Therefore the Inclinations that form the Angle b, c, d, are equal to the Inclinations that form the Angle c, d, f. I have applied this Reasoning to all Kinds of Triangles in my Geometry.

III. WE see in this Example, that the A Comparison Analytic Method does not dispatch a Question so soon as the Synthetic; but in Return two Methods.

one comprehends the refolving of it much

better, fince it lets you into the very Foundations of it; and having in a Manner found it out your felf, it will easily recur to your Mind at any Time: It likewise shews not only the Property of a Thing, but the Reason of that Property.

IV. To resolve a Question Analytically A Detail of the

we must, 1. Define all the Terms of it. Analysis.

2. State it distinctly. I have already clear'd

the Method of putting in Practice these Conditions. 3. We

must exactly separate what we know, from

what we do not yet know in it. 4. At- P. III. C. I.

known bear to what remains undiscover'd: The State of the Question will let you into those Relations. 5. Since each Relation has its Rules, in observing these Rules we shall come to the entire Knowledge of what we were ignorant of, by Means of the Relation it has to what we know. The great Point of Art here consists, in giving to what you know, and what you know not, such Names as will render the Relations they have to one another distinctly present to the Mind, and facilitate the comparing of them. The Practice of these Rules makes it appear, that the Things themselves are often clear to the Mind, when such Names have been given them as are suitable to their known Relations.

V. Tho' the Analysis is more easy to be It extends to seused on Mathematical Objects than any veral subjects.

other, (for their exact Determination ren-

ders it easier to distinguish in them what is known from what is unknown, and to settle the Relations of one to the other,) yet it may also take Place on other Subjects; when, for instance, the Question is about the Justification

of Man before God, why may not you, after having stated the Question clearly, and settled that which makes a Man odious to his sovereign Master, and a just Object of his Severity, enquire into what is opposite to his happy Return, and a more savourable Treatment both on the Part of God and Man? Whereupon you may endeavour to discover what might be capable of removing those Obstacles on either Part.

VI. THE more the Analysis has the Air of an exact Method, and supposes a particular Ability in him that uses it, (for it does not only capacitate a Man to unfold to others what he knows himself, but to invent by himself, and put others into a Way of Discovery,) it ought to be the more solid. Some Authors ridiculously affect it, in supposing what is in Question, or taking a wide Compass to find what might have been dispatch'd in four Words, or in proving of Propositions that have already the Evidence of Principles by others less clear and simple, they imitate the Masters of true Analysis, as the Burghers in Moliere do the Persons of Quality. (a)

In using this Method, it is not always necessary to go back to the first Principles; it is enough, if you suppose none, that are not true; and as for the rest, you must adapt your self to the Capacity of your Auditors, and to the proper Time of your Discourse. It would be, for Instance, absurd to ascend in every Sermon to the first Principles of Theology, as well as to those of Physics upon every Phænomenon. You are allowed to suppose what

⁽a) "As the Parts of Man's Body cannot move themselves, and "I see no outward Cause of their Motion, there must be a secret "Spring of it within. To find this, I strip a Thigh of its Integuments, which I name the Skin; then I see two long and slender Bodies, that run along the Thigh; one of which, more blackish than the other, shall be called a Vein, to distinguish it from the other, which beats, and shall be named an Artery: I press the one and the other with my Finger, and feel no Resistance; whence I conclude, either that they are empty and hollow, or contain some Fluid in their Cavity; and since, when I draw my Finger from them, they restore them to their former State, and the Part that is pressed cannot do that without some moving Force, I conclude, that they contain a Fluid that is in Motion." Rech. Analys. de la structure des parties du Corps humaine, dans le Journal de Paris, Janvier 1702. p. 105. Ed. d'Amst.

they afford convenient to your Subject; you must therefore limit your felf to Principles, the nearest to your Queftion, that have a visible Relation to it; otherwise the Mind will grow impatient, and the Attention will be diverted.

VII. As it is prudent to make great Allowance to Custom, without injuring Truth, The Synthetic I think the Analysis should not always be

employ'd; for though it be clearer than the other, it may appear more obscure to the Hearer that is not accustomed to it; who, taking a Prejudice, that you speak too learnedly to him, and that you are mistaken to suppose him capable of searching and discovering by himfelf; this Distrust of his Capacity makes him refuse his Attention to a Master he believes too nice; and therefore will not venture to follow him: This makes the Synthetic Way often necessary. They who chuse it, begin with defining the Subject, explaining that Definition; and after dividing it, to shew the Order in which they intend to treat the Subject; proving and opening the Parts of it one after another; and at last, adding the Answers to the Objections and Difficulties that might be started. They shall be the Subjects of the following Chapter.

Clearnesis, and may be the Crossian of Error, in preferi

CHAP. IX.

Andwire of Things or Telegrape of The State

Of Definition.

E know no Subject but What Definition what is very much com- is. pounded; the most simple

comprehend fo many Things, and the finallest offer so much to be known and studied, that very long Discourses, in the closest Style, cannot exhaust all that

may be faid and known upon them. But among the Realities of a Thing, and its Variety of Attributes and Properties, Properties, the effential ones, on which the rest depend, are but few, and may be set forth in few Words; and the Proposition that contains them is called a Definition: So that a Definition expresses briefly wherein the Nature

of a Thing principally confifts.

What ought to go before a Definition. P. IV. C. III. A. 5. II. HENCE it is necessary to have studied, and attained to the Knowledge of a Thing, at least in the Main, before we can define it. I have already laid down Rules, how to come to know essential Attributes.

Rules.

III. THE Language of a Definition ought

to be clear, short, and exact.

CLEARNESS should take Place in all our Discourses, but especially in a Definition, which, by its Shortness, would become a meer Riddle, if it were not clear. We desire at first, that the Hearer may know at once what we are upon, and whither we tend: But can he discover this in Obscurity? It would be clogging his Memory, at the Entrance, with an useless Load, and disquieting him; but if the Opening be clear, there would be great Hopes of Light in the Sequel. We have spoken largely on this Point of Clearness before.

METAPHORICAL Terms in Definitions often want this Clearness, and may be the Occasion of Error, in present-

ing one Thing under the Image of another. (a)

DESCARTES'S Definition of Love is not clear. Right Reason would be better defined by Ideas that give us the Knowledge of Things, or By-ways of Thinking, that shew us the Relations of them, than by Metaphorical Terms of Light, &c.

SPINOSA's Definition of a finite Thought is an equivocal Sophism; that it is a Thought terminated by another Thought: He defines a Thought, as a Man would

define

⁽a) M. Despreaux desines the Sublime thus, "It is a certain "Force of Discourse, proper to elevate and ravish the Soul, arising "either from the Greatness of the Thought, or the Nobleness of the Sentiment, or the Magnissence of the Words, or the harmonious, lively, and animated Turn of the Expression, that is, of each of these separately; but the perfect Sublime consists of all together." Upon which the Author of L'Europe savante observes, "That the Greatness and Nobleness of Thought, and Magnissence of Words, require a Definition, as much as the Sublime."

define a Bit of Extension. These Metaphorical Terms make us lose the Sight of the Subject defined.

IV. A Definition ought to be flort, as containing only what a Thing is effentially Brevity.

in it self; and being established as a proper

Relief to the Memory, in pointing out at once, in a few Words, all the Heads, to which you may reduce what

you are to hear in the Sequel.

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This Condition is wanting, when you mix any Thing that is accidental, with that which is effential; or add the Consequences of the Essence, to the Essence it self; or put in unnecessary Words. The closest Style, so it be clear, is the most proper for Definitions.

BOTH Rules are transgressed by the Use of synonimous Terms; for, not being clearer, they are superfluous.

THE Pomp and Emphasis of a Word often disguises the Obscurity of it; and this Obscurity hinders you from feeing, that the Terms of the Definition are meerly fynonimous with the Thing defined: To observe which, you need only define those Terms themselves. These Defects are found in Aristotle's Definition of a Man, which has long been looked upon as a Model; Man is a Rea-Sonable Animal: For, after explaining these two Terms. Animal, and Reasonable, the first will be reduced to fignify a Subject that is born and dies, eats and drinks, fleeps and wakes, and moves from one Place to another; and the fecond will import a Being that speaks, and draws Consequences well or ill, from some Principles true or false. Now this is precisely the Meaning of the Word Man it felf, in the Minds of all to whom this Term is not a meer Sound: But if you ask, What that Being is that fleeps, wakes, talks, &c.? The first Answer will be obscure, the succeeding Replies will soon appear to be confounded with the Question.

THERE are Subjects so simple, that they cannot be defined but by synonimous Terms; and then it is no Fault, since the Subject will admit of no other: And though they do not explain the Attributes in more Words than the Name of the Subject contains, yet they do not fail to render it clearer; for they have often the Advantage of not presenting the false Ideas which Prejudice has annexed to the Words you define: Thus instead of the Word Body, I put that of Extension, which is free from mistaken Prejudices; and instead of the Word Motion, I put the State of a Body applying its Surface succession.

fively. Synonima's are also free from an equivocal Sense: Thus I define Substance to be a Reality, that has its proper Existence. They are at least very useful to keep the Mind in a longer Attention on the same Idea; for the Haste with which the Understanding slips over simple Objects, prevents their making a just Impression; after one transient Review, and running them over in a Hurry, the next

Moment it knows nothing of them.

An Hearer is pleased with an Orator, who by synonimous Words holds him to an Idea which he ought to be familiar with, or which is so agreeable, that he is loth to part with it too soon. But bad Imitators, that is, they who copy without Judgment, observing this good Effect, fill all their Discourses with them, under a Pretence of greater Clearness and Emphasis: But this fatigues the Attention, palls and obscures the Understanding. Synonima's are not always exact, but alter something in the Idea, and thereby encrease the Perplexity.

SENECA blames those, with Reason, who define Philosophy to be a Knowledge of Things Divine and Human, with their Causes: For (says he) the Causes of Things Divine and Human are a Part of them. (b)

V. THE Fulness of an exact Definition will not impede the Brevity of it, if it only contains the effential Atributes; and it will be full, if it contains all of them. We have spoke on this Head already: The great Art is, to be very

attentive to the Generation of a Thing.

SOME add other Rules, which are only Confequences

of the former; as,

THAT a Definition must extend no farther than the Thing defined; and that it must agree to all that bears the Name of it, without an equivocal Sense. Both these are complied with in the omitting of nothing that is essential, and inserting nothing that is accidental.

THE old Maxim of defining by the P.I. Sect. III. Genus and Difference, has been already

C.5. confider'd.

VI. WE

⁽b) Quidam fapientiam ita finierunt, ut dicerent eam divinorum & humanorum Scientiam. Quidam ita: Sapientia est nosse divina & humana, & horum causas. Supervacua mihi videtur hæc adjectio, quia caussa divinorum humanorumque partes sunt. Sen. Ep. LXXXIX.

VI. WE have there also considered the Definition of Words, the Use and Rules Of the Definitiof it: These cannot pass for Principles, but ons of Words.

as they are Definitions of Things, some perfect, and others imperfect, but always true; for how absurd would it be to look upon the following Definitions as Principles? I call Brak a Triangular Circle; I call Philocrify, that excellent Virtue which is founded in the Love of Gold. The Definitions of Mathematicians are equally Definitions of Words and Things, true and just; for they have formed their Ideas themselves, and given Names to them; fo that when they define or explain the one, they define and explain the other: But it is not so with Definitions of Names, that answer Ideas formed upon external Objects; for it is a Question, whether the Definition of an Idea ought to pass for the Definition of a Thing, because we may not have conceived the Thing as it really is.

VII. But Definitions are not only of Use in the Synthetical, but also in the Analy- Definitions take tical Method; for when you would engage Place in the Analysis. your Hearer to discover himself the Nature

of a Subject you are explaining to him, it is of Use to begin with a Definition, that he may see the End, to which he may, in the Sequel, find the Way: As if you should say to him, This Definition, which you do not know low I discover'd it, I will by Degrees make you form your felf, if you attend to the Subject of the Question. When you tell your Hearer, at first, the End you would conduct him to, he is the more easy; for we follow a Leader much better, when we fee whither he leads us: But if we do not begin, it is at least necessary to end with a Definition; for after having led our Reader or Hearer through the several Turnings, that have let him into the Knowledge of a Subject, it is altogether important to collect, in a few Words, what is effential and precifely belonging to what we have taught him, and then an elegant, close, exact, and clear Definition forms an excellent Conclusion.



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I. HE Multiplicity of Things, and the narrow Bounds of human Understanding, make Divisions absolutely necessary. We cannot see all at one View, therefore we must divide our Research and our Res vide our Reflections and our

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Enquiries. (a) I have spoken before of the Distinction of Words, necessary to clear the Ambiguity of them. of look upon Division as it chiefly depends upon Definition. After having defined a Thing, it is necessary to explain it more at large; but lest the Mind should be confounded by that Extent, and by the Multitude of Things, it is necessary to reduce them to fewer Heads. The Things we fludy often bear a Resemblance to one another; and then we must unite them in a certain Class, to distinguish them from others, which they do not equally refemble: Besides, Things that are in a great measure like one another, do often differ in some Degree, which must not be confounded; and this is another Reason for distinguishing. As the numerous Objects of Sciences are near askin, we should be obliged to repeat upon one, what we have already faid in speaking on the other, and so grow excesfively prolix and tiresome, did we not make it a Law to begin with the Explication of the most common Attributes, and to pass, gradually, by Means of Divisions and Subdivisions, from general to particular Things. Distinctions are never more necessary, than when some Prejudices, authorized

⁽a) Facilius per partes in cognitionem totius adducimur. Quicquid in majus crevit facilius agnoscitur si discessit in partes. Sen. Ep. LXXXIX.

thorized by the Appearance of Duty, dispose us to look upon some Things or Relations, that have the same Name. and yet are very different, as alike in all Respects. Title of King does not imply the same Authority in all Governments: These are limited, as well as Absolute Monarchies; and these Limitations are again various. There

are many Degrees from a Subject to a Slave,

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WE must not confound Grammatical Distinctions, that ferve only to remove the equivocal Meaning of some Terms, with Logical Distinctions, that keep us from confounding different Species of the same Genus. For instance, when we say, A Promise is conditional, or not conditional, this Distinction is real; but when we add, A Condition is reasonable, or extravagant, the Word Reasonable modifies the Contract, and that of Extravagant goes for nothing. Methinks, it might be better expressed in this Manner: We fornetimes give the Name of a Condition to Clauses that do not merit it; for a Contract being a reasonable Act, what is against Reason can make no Part

DISTINCTIONS conceived in general Terms, that require others to clear them, are useless; as that of Contracts into Odious and Favourable. Now what is odious or burdensome to one, is often, for that very Reason, favourable to another; we must therefore have Recourse to other Principles to decide in a Case, which every Man

may turn to his own Advantage.

the Significal II. I Do not alledge Examples of these Important Reflections upon Logic. Divisions: This whole Logic is full of them, and here an Objection naturally prefents

it felf. We have filled the three first

Parts of this Logic, and a Part of this, with Definitions and Divisions: If the Reader found himself capable to examine the Justues of them, before he came to these two Chapters, which shew the Nature and Rules of them,

may they not appear superfluous?

WE must remember, that whatever falls within the Rules of Logic, we can do naturally, (as we faid at first,) and without it, the Rules of Logic could never have been discover'd, fince they suppose already a Knowledge of them, in Order to their Discovery: Therefore Logic, reflecting upon what we do naturally, and without the Help of Art, strengthens our natural Faculties by these Reflections, and confirms our Certainty, because it makes us comprehend the Grounds of it more distinctly. BESIDES,

Ccz

BESIDES, the Acts of the Understanding are so complicated, that we cannot exercise one without the Help of the other; yet, since we cannot explain all at once, we must do it successively by Parts: And this is the proper Place to treat of Definition and Division; for they are chiefly employ'd in Works of Extent and Variety: Now such Works are the proper Object of Method.

Some Learned Men of small Genius, and great Prefumption, are terrified at the least Thing they meet, which disorders their Ideas, or their Words, that supply the Place of them. It is odds, but some Learned Man of this Kind will find a Proof of Heresy, in thus placing the Chapter of Division at the End of Logic. "Should not we, (fays "be) begin to instruct with Definitions? and can we com-"modiously teach a young Man, before we have stock'd "his Memory?" This Reason rests upon a false Supposition, and, were it true, it would prove nothing, because it would prove too much: For on this Foot, Definitions should take up the first Chapter of Logic; whereas it presupposes the Knowledge of other Things: Therefore we must necessarily either abandon the Design of Writing any Thing of these Rules, or suppose that we may naturally do what we can yet better perform with the Assistance of the Rules.

Rules of Divifion.

III. As we are to define, so we must divide with Clearness, Brevity, and Fullness. (b)
Divisions are clear, when Use has once fix'd the Signification of the Terms, or when a former Explication has taken away the Obscurity and Ambiguity of them. They are short, when no Part is superfluous, but each is expressed in the most close and simple Style.

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A DIVISION of human Actions into fuch as are permitted, forbidden, commended, and indifferent, would violate this second Rule; for the indifferent ones are in the Number of them that be permitted. We

c. III. the Number of them that be permitted. We have spoken enough of its Fulness in a foregoing Chapter.

If a Division be clogged with a Word that might be omitted, we complain of its Prolixity: Life is too short to waste the least Part of it in Superfluities; we must not endure

⁽b) Vitium est, si genus ullum prætermittatur, deinde singulorum generum partes, in quo & deesse aliquam partem, & superare mendosum est: tum verborum omnium definitiones, in quibus neque abesse quicquam decet, neque redundare. Cic. de Orne. Lib. II.

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endure any Retardment in the Way of the Sciences: But for all that, we easily permit the same Distinction to be often repeated. The famous Robault, otherwise a very able and exact Author', has not miss'd one single Ocasion of telling us frequently, That the Names of Sensations are equivocal, and signify both the Sensation it felf, and the Cause of it.

DICHOTOMY, which opposes two Parts that are evidently contradictory, often shews the Justiness of a Divivision. When Seneca makes a Distinction of Benefits into necessary, profitable, and agreeable, it seems, that one of these Members is included in the other. What is necessary is profitable; and it is very agreeable to receive what is necessary. But we shall find, that he had Reason to make this Division, if we take him in this Manner: What we give a Man is either necessary, or not; that which is not necessary, is either of great Service, or meerly agreeable. (c)

It is with equal Reason that he distinguishes Things necessary into three Classes: Some, without which we cannot live; as the Air and Nourishment: Others, without which we ought not to live; as Honour, Liberty, Virtue: Others, without which we will not live; as the Preservation of

our Country, and of Persons that are dear to us.

IV. The greatest Part of our Errors proceed from this, That we confound different Things, and suppose some Objects to be entirely alike, that are not so. Therefore Distinctions (which correct our Missakes, and clear the Perplexity that arises from Difficulties and Objections, which are the ordinary Consequences of our Ignorance and Missakes)

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⁽c) Primo demus necessaria, deinde utilia, deinde jucunda, utique mansura. Incipiendum est autem a necessariis, aliter enim ad animum pervenit, quod vitam continet: aliter quod exornat, aut instruit.—Ex his qua necessaria funt, quædam primum obtinent locum, sine quibus non possumus vivere; quædam secundum, sine quibus non debemus; quædam tertium, sine quibus nolumus. Prima hujus notæ sunt, hostium manibus eripi, & tyrannicæ iræ & proscriptioni, ——Proxima ab his sunt, sine quibus possumus quidem vivere, sed ut mors potior sit: tanquam libertas, & pudicitia, & mens bona. Post hæc habebimus conjunctione, ac sanguine, usuque, & consuetudine longa, cara; ut liberos, conjuges, penates, ceteraque quæ usque eo animus sibi applicuit, ut ab illis, quam a vita divelli gravius existimet. Sen. de Benef. Lib. I. c. 11.

are agreeably receiv'd, and give a great Idea of the Penetration and Capacity of those that seasonably use them. Hence Men of low Genius, who are commonly bad at copying after others, are led to think, that a Knack of making Distinctions is sufficient to merit the Name of a great Man; but by their affected and improper Dinstinctions they justly fall, and draw others into such Inconveniences which Distinctions ought to have remedied: For they are us'd to part the Multitude of Objects, and the several Faces of them; but a Crowd of superstances Distinctions encreases the Consusion. Like a Man of an heavier Make than ordinary, that walks too hastily, stumbles, and hinders the Progress he would endeavour to quicken.

THE Excess of Divisions offers so great a Variety of Roads to us, which we must follow, one after another, that a Discourse by this Means becomes like a Labyrinth, the Mind is weary'd, and afraid of being entangled; but the more single the Way is, the more readily we are affur'd

that it leads to the End to which we tend (d).

ADD to this, that the Lovers of Distinctions often give into Chimera's: They think they see a Difference, that has no Being; those they perceive are so small, that they are of no use, and therefore deserve no Attention. A dull and unactive Soulis confus'd, and does not distinguish enough; one that is more volatile and sprightly, does it too much. When I see Men value themselves upon this false Learning, and these chimerical Discoveries, I think again they are in the Condition of such as are intoxicated; to whom one single Object appears so far multiply'd, that they slatter themselves with the Possession of great Treasures, the' their Stock be extremely moderate, their Wealth is all visionary.

THE Pleasure of making Distinctions, and the Fancy of enriching a Work with them, has given Birth to some that are very pleasant. There are, says a grave Author, Co-

Iours natural, and supernatural; as those of Ezek. xxiv. the Footstool of Saphir, beheld by the sixty six Elders. But how does he know that these Colours, the created by the Lord in that Moment, were not of the same Nature with those that were created at the Beginning of the World. But we must distinguish

⁽d) Dividi non concidi utile est----Idem enim vitii habet nimia quod nulla divisio: simile consuso est quicquid in pulverem usque sectum est. Sen. Ep. LXXXIX.

PART IV. the Art of THINKING. 391 distinguish as well as we can: Qui bene distinguit, bene docet (e).

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V. WHEN

" (e) To foften the Fierceness of the antient Germans, and to put " a Stop to their perpetual Revolts, the Emperors of the House of " France found it of Importance to bring over that warlike Nation " to the Christian Religion; and they invited them to embrace it by " great Advantages. The Nobility that came over to the Church " were advanced to be little inferior to Sovereigns: Great Privileges " were bestow'd upon Learning, and the Profesiors of it: The Uni-" verfities became a Sort of petty States. These Privileges were fol-"low'd by infinite Disorders; and the Schools of Wisdom became "Schools of Licentiousness. One of the strongest Proofs of an ex-" cellent Nature, is to pass some Years in a University without be-"ing ruin'd. And how could it be otherwise, when they were as-" fur'd of Impunity, and found their Judges their Protectors? Now " it is hard to give up some Privileges, however pernicious to So-" ciety, especially when they are of Profit to us: And this is the Rea-" fon, that rather than generously resign them, they were bent to support them by the most frivolous Reasons. The Men of the "Sword, fay they, have their Privileges; and the Soldiers have no "Tribunal to acknowledge but that of their Officers. But what Con-" fequence is this? And what can be more opposite to a Soldier than a "Scholar? Yet they are not (as they proceed) so opposite, and one " Distinction will bring them under the same Class. There is a " Militia Togata, and a Militia Sagata, that is, a Soldier in a military, " and another in a peaceful Habit: And, in effect, young Students " have all the Inclinations of ill-disciplin'd Soldiers. The Debau-"chery, the Licentiousness, the Sloth, the Quarrels, the naughty " Pleafantries, the Satisfaction of being no longer under the Eyes of "their Fathers; are not all these Features common to them both? "This indeed is too true; and it is from this that I draw a demon-" strative Reason against the Academical Privileges. It is necessary " that Soldiers, who, on the least Signal, ought to risque their Lives, " should look upon their Officers as their Sovereigns, and almost " as their Gods; it is necessary to form their Machine to mind no "other, neither their Pains nor Pleasures; to place their Hope in " none but them, and to fear none but them. But a Scholar ought not to do any Thing by way of Machine; Reason ought to be "his only Law: He ought to love his Teachers, and submit him-" self in Proportion as they instruct him. And the Masters, on their " part, ought not to own any for Scholars, but those who conduct "themselves by the Light of Understanding. Whoever must be held "in by other Principles, is none of our Dependants; he ought to "go under other Masters. A Student is a Being truly reasonable; " and when he deserves a Blow, he is an Animal of another Order; " he is fallen from his State."

V. WHEN we propose to put any Sub-Important Adject in a full Light, if it be compounded, vice to those we must divide it into its Parts, to study who compose. them one after another. But fince we do not know it entirely, and at first have but an imperfect Knowledge of it, it may easily happen, as it often does, that the Division we make of it is not very exact, nor the Order in which we propose to handle it, tho' at first it appears to be the most natural and convenient. They who write their Thoughts, in proportion as they think, fuffer themselves to be often betray'd into specious Divisions, which expose them to Inconsistencies, and leave a Confusion in their Discourses. I should take it not to be amis for a Man, that meditates upon a Subject, and sets himself to master it, to lay hold of the first Divisions that offer themselves, and regulate the Order he will follow, on the first Lights that occur to his Mind; for we are often reduc'd to go, as it were, groping along, in order to discover what is unknown. But as, while we advance in Knowledge, we observe the Mistakes into which we fell, and the false or irregular Steps we have taken, we must endeavour to explain to others our Discoveries in a more clear and exact Order, than what we us'd before our felves; it would be better first of all to inform our selves well in the Nature of all the Parts of a Subject we propose to treat upon; then we may easily see how to range most conveniently what we know of it, and to divide it; otherwise we may run into specious Divisions, or keep to certain general Forms of Method and Definitions, that are often the Causes of Diforder: But we must always remember not to force any. Thing, to accommodate it to a certain Method; but Method, on the contrary, must it self be subject to the Nature of the Things on which it is employ'd.

VI. FROM this, and what is faid at the End of Chap. II. we may easily comprehend whence it comes that most Men are so little improv'd by their Studies. The Masters, who ought to instruct them, steal here and there a few Definitions, by which they see no clearer than if they fell from the Clouds: To these they add a certain Number of Distinctions. To this Heap of Trisles they give the Name of a System; and when the young Scholar is come to the last Chapter, and his Parrot-like Lessons have been often applauded by his Master, he thinks himself very learned, the he knows nothing; and is at that Time made incapable

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of Learning any Thing, fince his Master has had the Address to prejudice him against Judgment and Reasoning: It would be better he had never read or wrote at all, for then he would have altogether attended to good Sense, which the Prejudices of the Schools could not have eclips'd; and as he would not value himself upon his Understanding, he would take care not to decide upon what he did not understand: He would be always ready to hear others, and would not open his Mouth, but when he was well assured, and perceiv'd most evidently, that what he was going to say, is founded upon good Sense.

CHTICKETHICKETOCKE

CHAP. XI.

Of the Method of ranging Arguments; of disputing; and of handling Controversies.

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FTER having divided and explained in Order the different

Parts of a Definition, and of the Divisions that follow it, we must then proceed to the Proofs of the Explications given, and to establish the Truth of the Propositions ad-

vanc'd. When the Parts of a Definition and a Discourse are numerous, we must not defer the Proofs till we have explain'd the Sense of all the Parts to be proved. The Hearers would languish too much in Expectation of the Proofs, and perhaps get a Custom to pass them over unregarded; besides, the being oblig'd to resume, in order, each Part to be proved, would render it too tedious and prolix. In these Cases the Proofs should be join'd immediately to each Explication.

THE Proofs may be deferr'd till the Sense of all is explain'd, when certain general Arguments are employ'd, that may equally extend to several Parts; but the Proofs must precede, when the Principles, upon which the Truth of a Proposition is establish'd, serve likewise to clear the

Sense of it.

II. Bur

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Proofs.

II. But in neither of these Cases must any Proof be used that is not solid and demonstrative; otherwise they will be liable to Exceptions that destroy the Evidence of them, and so expose the Truth to the Contempt of its Adversaries, giving them, sooner or later, when the least Passion or Prejudice

prevails, room of Victory and Triumphing (a).

LET none pretend to fay, he must accommodate himself to the Prejudices of Men; that the greatest Part of them, incapable of weighing his Arguments, only count and judge of them by Tale; that fince Men differ so much in their Taste and Manner of Thinking, what appears weak to one, will charm another. All this would be right, if they were only to be amused; but we are to make them Disciples of Truth. And what Account ought we to make of those who have so little Delicacy in this Point, tho' they acquiesce in the Truth; since they as readily admit an Error in the room of it, and take up freely with any Thing for a Proof that, for this very Reason, is a false one, because it does not prove at all? Was Truth capable of Knowledge and Sense, how would she entertain the Respect they pay her, when they would as easily pay it to Error? Our Merit does not confift in viewing of Truth, but in our Care and Precaution to view it diligently, and to be affur'd of it. They who thus employ all Sorts of Proofs, contenting themselves to gain the ignorant Multitude, use less Endeavours to illustrate the Truth, than to encrease their Party; it is Ambition, and not pure Zeal, that animates them. Impotency, and a Want of Nobleness of Soul, carries them to form a Party, and to applaud themselves in the Number of them: And such Men as thefe are commonly not only furious and contentious, but also bad Reasoners. He who, out of a sincere Love of Truth, is very difficult in the Choice of his Proofs, gains two Advantages by it: He is not in Danger of finding those he advances overthrown; and if, notwithstanding the Sincerity of his Intention, he mistakes, far from being

⁽a) "I do not approve the Practice of proving our Religion by the Prosperity of our Undertaking: It has other Foundations than the Authority of Events. For when People are accustom'd to these plausible Arguments, so suitable to their Taste, there is a Danger of shaking their Faith, when contrary and disadvantageous Events happen in their Turn." Mont. L. I. Ch. XXXI.

ing angry with those who set him aright, he is pleas'd with them, selo

To be provok'd at Objections, is a Sign of being guided by other Principles than those of Evidence: A true Lover of it will not be afraid of being better inform'd, and an Objection full of Light will be always well receiv'd.

Tis a plain Proof that few maintain their Opinions purely for the Love of Truth, fince nothing is more rare amongst Men, than to correct their Ideas by those of another; every Man obstinately persists in his own, contradicts

himself incessantly, and seldom retracts.

III, WE may love a Truth, of which we are perswaded, by two very different Motives. We love it, and are zealous to spread tives of the it, either meerly because it is a Truth; or

There are two different Mo-Love of Truth.

chiefly, because it belongs to us; it is our own Work, or we have adopted it, as if we had our felves discover'd it. These two Principles produce very different Effects. When all our Zeal for it is only founded on a Supposition that it is true, when we know the Error of it, we quit it as zealously as we embrac'd it, and take it kindly of those that undeceive us. If we love a Domestic only for his Fidelity, we shall be oblig'd to those that will discover his Rogueries to us: And if we relish a Dish only because we think it wholesome, we shall heartily thank him that discovers it to be Poison. But when we espouse an Opinion only in a blind Love to our felves, and as far as it is our own, we hear all Objections with Impatience, we are angry with those that combat the Sentiments which our Passion endears to us, and we look upon them as the Enemies of our Honour and Pleafures. State . Albert one your

IT is not always easy to distinguish these two Motives: the most affecting is often conceal'd under the specious Appearances of the more just. The Tranquillity with which we hear those who differ from us, and the Friendship we preserve for them, when they are Gentlemen, may serve to give us Light:upon a Principle that governs us; and it is: entirely necessary to discern this. When we do not love the Truth, but because it is Truth, we carefully examine all its Proofs, and fear nothing more than doing an Injustice to it: But when Paffion is mingled with it, every Proof appears to be excellent; we arm our felves with every Thing, and the Heat with which we endeavour to give Blows to an Enemy, hinders our seeing that we lie open

to his, and to others more formidable (b). This is the Case of Christians divided and exasperated one against another: They often facrifice Religion to what they call Orthodoxy. Pious Men are often the most subject to this Defect. The good Testimony they can give themselves, in feveral Respects, hinders their Zeal from being suspected to them. The learned Dodwell is a modern Instance of it: a Man as much diffinguish'd by his Character, as his Erudition; but he was unhappily animated by a Spirit of Party. His Aversion to the Nonconformists made him relish all that was uneasy to them; and he finish'd his Extravagancies by the most incredible Paradox in the World, viz. The Messiah being long foretold and expected, at last came into the World: But what was the End of this Master-Piece of Heaven? It was nothing, without a little Water pour'd on a Man's Head by another confecrated by a Bishop, who himself was consecrated by another Bishop, whose Mission reach'd up, from Age to Age, as far as the Apostles. This Ceremony could not confer the Gift of Immortality, unless administer'd in all these Circumstances. The Love of God and our Neighbour, Piety, Faith in Jesus Christ, Regeneration, &c. without this, are vain. With this alone you will escape dying like a Beast. Thus the medding of the Blood of Jesus Christ gives an unbounded Liberty to the People of the World, who are the most ready to abuse it. Religion becomes suspected, by the Advancement and Credit it gives its Ministers; and this Suspicion is fortified by the Use they make of their Authority, in Favour of their Visions and Interests, at the Expence of Trnth.

ANOTHER Proof that most Men are more concern'd for their Opinions, because they are theirs, than because they are true, is, that they are more interested for their particular Sentiments, than for those that are common with

them to all Christians.

It is for this Reason that Men set speculative Divinity above moral: They are agreed very well about Duties, but they are not agreed about Opinions; each Man finds in this speculative Part of Religion his savourite Sentiments.

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⁽b) "The Love of Truth it self, if it be any Thing lively, will "pass the Bounds of what the Interest of Truth precisely demands." Hist. de l'Ac. 1710. p. 46.

IV. It will be readily allow'd, that fimple Proofs ought to be preferr'd to those that are more compounded; and likewise, that those which arise most naturally from the Subject, and make way for the better understanding of those which fol-

low, ought to precede. I standard a sonir

But there is a considerable Difference between saying, that a former Proof may be subservient to the better and clearer apprehending of a second, than to affirm, that the sirst supports the second, and that this gathers Strength from the former: For, in this last Sense, you make that a new Proof, which is only a Consequence of another, and the same single Proof presented under different Faces.

V. I AM so far from condemning this last
Method, of turning the same Proof into different Shapes, that I think it very necessary.

By this Means the Mind repeats it without Fatigue, the Attention is refresh'd; it is render'd more satisfactory and samiliar, and makes more lasting Impression in the Memory.

And here it is proper to accommodate our selves to the Capacities and Tastes of Men, in enlarging our Proofs by
Comparisons and Examples: This is their true Place. But
it is one Thing to repeat the same Argument under different
Turns, and another to make each Turn pass for a new Argument. In this last Case we deceive those we instruct, and
clog them with a pretended Variety.

EVERY Proof then that wants the Support of another, ought not to pass for a Proof. Every Passage, for Instance, which in it self, and in its Connection with what went before and follow'd, may receive a probable and natural Explication, but different from that, on which we ground the drawing of an Argument from it, ought not to be reckon'd for a true Proof. If any other Passage determines more expressly the Sense in which it is necessary to be taken, in order to draw a Demonstration from it, the more express can

only deserve the Name of an Argument.

ALL Proofs ought to be explain'd as simply and briefly

as the Matter will allow of.

But when a Proof is so compounded, that it requires to be enlarg'd upon, to appear in its full Light, I doubt it would not be very proper to give first the Substance of it in a few Words. The Obscurity of such a summary Account might cause a Prejudice against the Proof it self; And it would be better to establish the Grounds of it as briefly and evidently as possible, and then to collect them;

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to shew the Force of the whole Proof; which being thus clear'd by a Detail of its Parts, may thereupon, without losing any Thing of its Evidence, be both intelligibly and

compendiously propos'd.

of the Number of Proofs.

VI. ONE demonstrative Proof may convince a reasonable Man, when a thousand feeble ones will not be sufficient to him; for he never assents out of Weariness, nor upon Appearances only. A thousand weak Proofs, or rather Appearances of Proofs, are no more one, than a thousand Statues are one living Man.

A NUMBER of Proofs may have fome Force in arguing upon Matters of Circumstances, where one does not prove; but a Concurrence of them will decide, and leave no room for doubting. This circumstantial Arguing has, I think, introduc'd a Mistake of applying a Multitude of Proofs in

other Cafes, is a modified amount beild and amount of will

Common Argumants are void, like striking back the same Ball at Tennis. Divines are at Variance about the Inability of Man to do his Duty; some allow him more, and some less Power for it. Each may pretend to the Honour of desending the Cause of God; one the Attribute of his Power, which has the Glory of doing all; the other, of his Justice, which requires no more of his Creatures than they are able to perform.

Thus they reciprocally brand one another with the Title of Enemies of God: They might as well fpeak out, as in Time of War, in plain Terms, and fay, our Enemies. But there are Divines who have no Self-Love at all: The Love of God has taken up the Place of it, at least they think so; and on that Supposition, they use all as Enemies of God,

whom they do not think proper to love.

Nothing is more usual among Divines, than to cast upon one another a mutual Reproach of Prejudice: Each boldly challenges the other, to consult the chief Rule, which himself, as he says, keeps close to; and looks upon this Courage, to be a Proof of the Goodness of his Cause. But if this Language be a Proof of Truth, each has Reason on his Side, for they both talk in this Manner: "Not so much Reasoning, Speculation, and Subtilty, says one; let us submit to God, he is our great Master, he instructs us in the holy Scripture, we must not depart from his Decisions." And who doubts of it? But each pretends

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question; which we must not suppose to be decided, when

we take it for granted, and and models of and to an

In order to convince, you may join many Arguments, provided they be very folid. But when we would move the Passions, Multiplicity doth but perplex, and makes the Heart less susceptible of the Motions we would raise in it. When we have gain'd Admittance into it by one Avenue, we must not leave it to re-enter at a new one: We must pursue the Reasons that have begun to shake it, till they take entire Possession of it.

VIII. A MULTIPLICITY of weak Proofs Ill Effects of produces dangerous Effects; it gives the E- weak Proofs.

nemies of Truth an Advantage over it, and accustoms young Men to be content with Probability: and after being us'd to confound it with Certainty, they know not what to maintain. Besides, it exposes those Men to unjust Suspicions, who having a more than ordinary Tenderness and Concern for the Truth, avoid to support it by Proofs unworthy of it, and which would be difown'd by it. The ferupulous Devotion found Men have for the Truth, puts those of low Thoughts (who are led only by their Prejudices and Paffions) on a Notion that they have forfaken it; because they renounce all Phantasins of Proofs which are by no Means suitable to it. But had they more Sense, and did they love the Truth as it deserves, they would be pleas'd with those who take away from the Enemies of Truth an Occasion of a feeming Triumph, in subverting the Proofs which they thought it was established upon; and they would confider, that to reject a feeming Proof that wants Solidity, is to correct an Error. 1019 1101

IX. The same Meanness of Understanding, soo apt to take one Argument and its the Number of Dependencies for many, has often transitive Number of formed a single Controversy into many, by the different Manner of proposing it. The Spirit of Disputing has produced the same Effect: Like an Enemy to Peace, it has multiplied our Controversies, as if it was to be feared we could never be far enough distant from one another. As this wrangling Humour wattes a deal of Time, undermines Charity, and often obscures the Fruth, it would be Wissom to retrench, as much as possible, all that serves to nourish it: Let no Man therefore undertake the Discussion of a Controversy, till he has first weighed the Importance of it; that he may wholly give it up, if it does

not appear sufficiently worthy of Attention; or else treat it with a suitable Indisferency: Then he must nicely put the State of the Questiou, that he may separate what is agreed, from what is contested. It must be also consider'd, whether this Controversy be not a Consequence of another, on the Determination of which it so far depends, that it needs no particular Discussion.

X. In answering Objections we must

How we must follow the fame Maxims: They who use answer Objecthem for Proofs, have also multiplied them. zions. taking Pleasure in making a Shew of a great Number of Arguments; but when we can discover, that many Objections are only one in different Faces, we fatisfy at once, the natural Love of Eafe, and a laudable Inclination to Truth it felf. Though some Men delight to engage in Difficulties, yet even those do not relish tiresome Prolixities: So that in abridging of Controversies you oblige all Mankind. A wife Man, who is content to anfwer folidly the strongest and most reasonable Part of his Adversary's System, does not trouble himself to fall upon all the defective Parts, and little Slips of it: This would occasion immense Replies, and eternize a Dispute, that at last would not touch at all, or but slightly, the principal Subject. A learned Man who thinks justly, is not obliged to

XI. We stop the Mouth of an AdRetortion.

versary by way of Retortion, that is, in
shewing him, that the Difficulty he proposes, does not fall less on the Hypothesis he defends, than
on that he condemns. This Answer becomes stronger, if
you prove, that the Difficulty is still greater in his Hypothesis. But as this Way of Answering may raise a third
Opinion, equally strong against both Sentiments, it is proper, after retorting, to shew that the Hypothesis you defend is free from the Difficulty, while the other cannot
get over it.

draw out all the Errata of the Books he disapproves.

INGENIOUS Turns are dazzling, and hinder us from perceiving how easily we might, by retorting, subvert the Thoughts they express. Man is so great a Lover of Truth, that Fables cannot recommend themselves, but by Vertue of a true Sense, which they cloath with agreeable Fictions. But it may be replied, That the Heart of Man has so little Assection for Truth, that to procure it a Reception, we are obliged to disguise it under Fables.

IF it be affirmed, That God be the true Cause of the Pleasures of Sense, we may imagine, that the Felicity of the Life to some will still consist in the Satisfactions of Sense.

Reply. IF God is the true Cause of the Pleasures of Sense, we ought to conclude, that he can immediately, without the Organs of the Body, affect the Soul with delightful Sensations.

"THE Study of Religion gives Way to a Diversity of Sentiments; and hence scandalous Contests arise, and

" Schisms still more scandalous."

Answer. THE Heads of a Sect would fight alone, or rather would dispute no more, if the Zeal of the Ignorant did not make a Party for them. Men are commonly most furiously set upon what they least understand. They who study Religion as it deserves, and as good Sense directs, may ordinarily draw from it uniform Instructions; and though their Ideas should sometimes differ, yet the Knowledge and Love of Religion will engage them to love one another, and to unite in the Bond of Peace, notwithstanding all these Differences.

" LIBERTY gives Room to Seditions.

Reply. It has been observed, that the greatest Commotions in all Ages have generally happened among the most Barbarous Nations, and under the most Despotic Governments: Let them but make good Laws, and observe them well. People under happy Circumstances have nothing more at Heart than to preserve their present State and Condition; but restless Spirits will ever be turbulent under any Form of Government.

XII. SOMETIMES the Mouth of an Adver- Investives.

fary is stopped by Invectives; but this Re-

b, of it

ferve ought not to be employ'd till all the rest be ex-

XIII. THERE are two other Ways of anfwering an Objection, that extreamly shorten
a Dispute; and I cannot conceive why I did not think on
them in the first Composition of this Logic; for they are
much in Use, and stop the Mouth of an Adversary at
once. One consists, in causing (when you dispute by
Writing) the Copies, you do not relish, to be suppressed:
The other consists, in saying to your Antagonist with a firm
Tone, and a devout Air, "You are an Heretic, and is
"you do not hold your Tongue, I will inform against
you." Yet we must not dissemble in Logic, that these
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Methods have their Inconveniences; for, as to the former, to confer with Men on Condition, that if they go on to believe their Reasons better than yours, you will destroy them; is not this cruelly mocking them, and a

turning your felf into Ridicule? (b)

We should not have had any Book, or Helps to inform our selves, and must have begun all over again, nay, we must have been in Danger of seeing every new Production stifled in its Birth, if Men in Power, prejudiced for or against different Opinions, should destroy what they did not relish. Divinity has varied: We have seen the Works of the Primitive Fathers, where, in the first Page, we have been told, that a Castration had been made of all that was not conformable to the Sentiments received in the Time and Place of the Impression. The Mathematicians have been taken for Conjurers. The Philosophers have been proscrib'd by Turns; Aristotle, Ramus, Descartes, have successively undergone the same Fate. Volumes of History have been burnt by those, who could not relish the Facts alledged in them as true.

Besides, these Precautions would not have all the Success that may be expected from them, nay, they often do more Harm than Good. A Work, that is not allow'd to be bought or read, is more eagerly sought for, and more highly valu'd. We are likewise prejudiced in favour of it; we think it would not have been prohibited, could it have been answer'd. How many are Spinosists, that never read Spinosa? They are so, because they will be so. What would have been the Case, had we only his Works in Manuscript in some Corner? For at this Day all the World may read them; and a Man need only read them with a due Examination, to be sensible of the

Extravagancies they contain.

As for the odious Nicknames of Heterodox, Heretic, &c. they are toffed backwards and forwards; and the most mistaken Man in the World may cast them, very heartily and zealously on those who think more justly. The Face of the Earth is divided into several Governments, where the Courts decide very differently upon Religion, but always finally: So that the Quarrel must be determined by

⁽b) "He that proves his Discourse by Command and Bullying, "shews that the Reason of it is desective. Mont. L. III. C. 12.

by Blows, when calm Reason is abandon'd; Mankind must destroy one another, and come to the last Extremities by it. In the same Communion, different Parties alledge opposite Decisions, each in their Favour. We are not agreed about a supream Judge, and what is at first proposed, as a sure Means of ending Disputes, is it self turned into a Dispute that is daily encreasing.

XIV. SOMETIMES, instead of answering a Difficulty we elude it; we play upon the Imagination with some lively Answer, but leave the Mind without any Light. A Compliment; a Stroke of History; a Rallery; a Start of Passion; a Figure of Rhetoric; a pious Reslection, that is out of its Place; a grave Remonstrance; all this makes an unattentive Mind forget the Difficulty; they suppose it resolv'd, because they

St. Augustin, speaking of the Right of Primogeniture, taken by Jacob from Esau, cries out. O surprizing Events, but prophetical; executed by Men, but condemned by God! The Exclamation and the Antithesis leave the Difficulty

in all its Force.

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XV. OBJECTIONS sometimes happen, Difficulties that which we cannot clearly and directly and do not hurt Cerfwer; because the Solution of them sup-

poses some Notions which we have not.
But if these Objections strike at some Opinion, that is established upon clear and convincing Proofs, our Incapacity to answer them ought not to shake our Perswasion; for should the Mind at last be reduced to put off the Belief of something, till it knows every Thing? And should it doubt whether it really sees an Object that strikes it with Evidence; because there are others, that are not within its View?

XVI. WHEN Difficulties present themfelves very naturally, we shall be pleased proposing Diffiwith him who proposes, and resolves them.

We are charm'd especially, when the Anfwer to an Objection serves for a new Proof to the Question it seemed to weaken; and this always happens, when the Answer is drawn from the very Principles of the Subject we are upon. The Difficulty may present a new Case of Morality, or a new Phænomenon of Nature; the Application of the Principles to this new Case or Phænomenon, proves the Necessity and Fertility of them.

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But as among Authors and Orators, a good Original is always follow'd by an infinite Number of ill Copiers; there are Men, who, to shine in answering Objections, first overstrain themselves to find them, and not only propose some, which never came into their Minds, and by this Means embroil a Matter that was in it self clear, but besides, after having laid out all their Force in pushing home an Objection and a Difficulty, they only answer it obscurely and imperfectly, or their Hearers very much fatigued, do not comprehend their Answer but by Halves.

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Writings; the publick Schools, Colleges, have Days appointed for this Exercise: And it is agreed by all Men of good Sense, that

great Abuses are crept into them. An Indian Traveller, not acquainted with our Customs, were he to come into some Places where Disputations are held, would take them at least for Taverns(c); and the Transports of Passion, with which the Name of God, and the most sacred Mysteries are mentioned, would make him think them a worse Kind of Rendevous. I would therefore have Good-nature and Politeness always reign, and be the ruling Law on such Occasions:

⁽c) 'What is the End and Business of these Disputes? One goes ' towards the East, the other to the West; they lose the main Point, and are bewilder'd in a Crowd of Incidents: At the End of one · Hour's Storm, they do not know what they feek for; one is Low, the other High; both wide of the Mark: One lays hold on a Word, or Similitude; the other does not perceive what is objected; he is fo deeply engaged in his own Course, that he only thinks of fol-' lowing himself, not you. He that finds himself weak in the Back, · fears every Thing; is first confounded himself, and then entangles ' the Question; or in the Struggle of the Debate grows peevish, refolves to be filent, and is dash'd out of Countenance, in his spiteful ' Ignorance affecting a proud Contempt, or a foolish modest Shiness of contending: Provided it doth but amaze you, he doth not care how much he exposes himself. The other counts his Words, and e gives you them for Reasons: This Man only uses the Advantage of his Voice and Lungs. One concludes against himself; and another deafens you with Preambles, and useless Digressions. One arms ' himself with downright Affronts, and aims to pick a Quarrel, to fling off the Company of an Understanding that pinches his own. ' The last sees nothing in Reason, but keeps you in Play with the Logical Turn of his Clauses, and the Forms of his Art. Mont. Lib. III. Ch. 8.

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Occasions; and that all barbarous and equivocal Terms should be banished, or that the Respondent and Opponent should be equally obliged to explain them, if requir'd; that the Questions should be really disputable, lest young Men should insensibly get a Habit of opposing Evidence, forced as they are by the Laws, Customs, and Orders of their Superiors, to argue against Propositions that might pals for Principles, or are not far from being fo. Further, left a triffing and obstinate Humour should be bred and nourished in them; It would be better that a greater Value should be set on the Clearness of proposing their Arguments, and the Variety of their Instances, than on the Force of their Objections (d). Young Students should have the Liberty of proposing the Difficulties that present themselves naturally to their Minds, or the Diversity of their Reading affords; but it would be very pernicious to put them upon the Search for any, and fo to confound what is clear.

QUESTIONS of Importance only should be disputed upon: Insignificant Principles, since they may by Degrees lead us to ill Habits, ought to be suspected, and laid aside. In disputing upon Trisles the Mind is accustom'd to trisling; it loses by Degrees the Taste of Solidity; and meer Nothings, if uncommon, appear to it of great Consequence. Seneca mentions one Didymus, that wrote four Thousand Books of Trisles; the Dispute about the Country of Homer; the true Mother of Eneas; whether Anacreous loved the Pleasure of a Bottle more than others; were Dd3

(d) 'When you gain the Advantage by your Proposition, it is 'Truth that gains it: When you do it by Order and Conduct, you

gain it your self. Mont. Lib. III. Ch. 8.

This Remark of Montagne is very judicious; it should be seriously reflected upon, and consider d, That we can never put too great a Value upon Clearness and Order. Though a Book be filled with new Discoveries; though we be obliged to own, that the Author knows an infinite Number of Things which others are ignorant of; yet he also is ignorant of more than he knows: What the wifest of Men comprehends, is nothing to what he does not know; and if we judge of the Excellency of Knowledge by the Number of Things known, every Man's Knowledge is infinitely impersect: But a Discourse that explains a Subject with all the Clearness of which it is capable, and puts it in its sull Light, is perfect in its Kind: We cannot say it wants any Thing, and all we might add to make it clearer, would be superstuous.

of the Number; with Thousands of other Fooleries, which it would be happy to forget, if a Man had the Misforune

to know them. (e)

THE Pleasure of raising Objections, often brings a Man into Error; and these Errors appear to me to be of all, the least pardonable. The Eagerness of contradicting hinders us from laying hold of the Sense of an Author; the least equivocal Expression is enough to make us attribute to him an Opinion which he has not: In vain does he clear it in the Sequel, we will always have him fay what he has not faid. If he has the Sincerity to own, that he did not express himself distinctly enough, we are not content with that Acknowledgment; we are resolved that he is obstinate in maintaining an Opinion, which we ascribe to him, to heighten our Triumph over him: We should often have been of his Sentiment, had he faid the contrary to what he lays down. And there are Men that might be led to believe, what we think true, by our appearing to think otherwise than we do.

XVIII. As to Disputes in Conversation, since we are free to engage in them, or decline them, I would advise a Man never to amuse himself, in disputing with those that love to trifle and cavil; for this only tends to confirm them in their ill Habits; and this Kind of Disputes infensibly forms us to Impatience and Passion. (f) We

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⁽e) An tu existimas reprehendendum, qui supervacua usu sibi comparat, & pretiofarum rerum pompam in domo explicat : non putas eum, qui occupatus est in supervacua litterarum supellectile? Plus scire velle, quam sit satis, intemperantiæ genus est. Quid, quod ista liberalium artium consectatio molestos, verbosos, intempestivos, sibi placentes facit, & ideo non discentes necessaria, quia supervacua didicerunt? Quatuor millia librorum Didymus Grammaticus scripsit: miser, si tam multa supervacua legisset. In his libris de patria Homeri quæritur, in his de Æneæ matre vera: in his libidinosior Anacreon, an ebriofior vixerit: in his, an Sappho publica fuerit: & alia, quæ erant dediscenda, si scires. Sen. Ep. LXXXVIII.

⁽f) When a Dispute is broken and irregular, I quit the Thing. and tie my felf to the Form, with Despite and Indiscretion too; and throw my felf into a restiff, malicious, imperious Way of Wran-

^{&#}x27;gling; fuch as I have reason afterwards to blush for. It is impos-' fible to be upon the Square with a Fool; my Judgment is not

must only dispute with those that love the Truth so well, as not to be uneafy at learning it from another. Difputants must be calm; each of them Lovers of Truth above all Things; not discourse with one another but in a View of knowing better; join in this Defign, and affift one another towards it. They must be pleased to find that they agree; and look upon the Necessity of pushing a Difficulty that is not refolved, as a Misfortune. The Respondent ought to own his Uneasiness to the Opponent, when he finds himself embarass'd; and the Opponent, instead of taking the Advantage of him, should endeavour to disentangle him, if he can; or, if he thinks the Truth is on his own Side, instead of pressing hard upon him whose Sentiments differ from his own, he ought to give him Time to reflect, and let him fee by his Modesty, that he does not aim at Victory, but is well fatisfy'd, provided, in Time, the Truth comes to Light. (g)

THE Necessity of observing these Rules is very plain, yet the Practice of them is rare; and as Diversion is only the Pretence at Play, so the Discovery of Truth is only the Pretence of Disputing. At Play Men design to win; in Disputes they would shine, and get the better: Far from giving a mutual Assistance for the Information of one another, they hardly hear one another; and commonly an Opponent bestows all his Attention to prepare a new

Objection, while the first is answering.

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CIRCLES and numerous Affemblies are very improper Theatres for useful Disputes, unless you know well the Character of those with whom you dispute, or if you please, seem to dispute: Self-love is there too much exposed to Temptation; there is too much Honour for the Victorious, and too much Confusion for the Vanquish'd. Commonly Men dispute ill in such Circumstances; they sell to do do do

^{&#}x27;We profess an Enmity, first against the Reasons, and then against the Man. We learn to dispute, only to contradict: And each Man contradicting, and being contradicted, it comes to this. That the Fruit of Disputing is to lose and destroy the Truth. Mont. Lib. III. Ch. 8.

⁽g) I find my felf prouder of the Victory I gain over my felf, when in the very Heat of Combat, I bring my felf to submit to the Reason of my Adversary; then I am pleased with the Victory I gain over him by his Weakness. Mont. Lib. III. Ch. 8.

dom keep to the State of the Question; and he who is exact in calling you back to it, displeases; he grows trouble-some, and seems to put on the hateful Character of a Master. Men play the Fool, and mingle their Pleasantries with the most serious Subjects, and so accustom themselves to make a Sport of what deserves a most serious Application. I have more than once had the Mortification, to see the most aweful Matters, give Occasion to those that are called devout Persons, to indulge their Vanity.

In our very Amusements, in our Gaieties, and Converfation, in short, on the lightest Subjects, we are confounded; when once we grow warm, we enter upon every

Thing, and end nothing.

With what Spirit we ought to
dispute.

XIX. EXPERIENCE shews us, we
cannot be too much upon our Guard, when
we come to dispute: We must acquire a
Habit of Clearness and Politeness, and be
filent, if we find our selves disposed to grow

peevish and passionate. Disputes set the greatest Friends at Jars. Messieurs Menage and d'Aubignac quarrelled about nothing; it was, whether the Heautontimoroumenos of Te-

rence lasted ten or fifteen Hours.

NOTHING is more dangerous than to take Pleasure in Disputing; it leads to Pyrrhonism, one of the greatest Reproaches of human Nature; or else it fills us with Prejudices, and nourishes an ill-natur'd Zeal in the Heart. We see Men, whose whole Christianity lies in a passionate Way of Disputing; were they to live in Peace and Charity, they would have no Virtue to practise, and must be

reduced to acquire new Virtues.

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WE must act, when we dispute, like two Friends, that are taking Measures to put an Action at Law on a right Foot. One proposes an Objection to be resolved; but is he to whom he makes it, instead of answering the Dissiculty, amuses himself in confirming the Sentiment it opposes with new Proofs; he will not ridicule this Impertinence of his Friend, but will for a Moment leave the Objection, to weigh these new Proofs, and after having shewn the Weakness, or Force of them, he will return to the Objection, to place the Truth in its full Light and Certainty.

"Adody I gain over hem by his Weakness, safey, and 111 Ch. 8.

A DISPUTE should be looked upon as a (i) Conference, where each endeavours to augment his Light, by adding it to that of another's; both reciprocally affifting one another, in examining the Interest of their Thoughts. Did Men dispute with this Temper, they would apply themselves, before every Thing, to enter well into the Thought of him with whom they dispute. Nothing is more agreeable or useful, than thus to read the Minds of Men: It is a fure Way to profit by what you find Good in them; to acknowledge in what you agree; and turn it to clear a Difference, that is, to put the State of a Question right, and manage it well. It is easy to deal thus with Persons we love and esteem; and what Advantage is there in disputing with others, when we are obliged to it? The less we love them, the more it is our Interest not to confute them without Reason; and how can we properly refute them, if we do not diffinctly know what they think? (k)

Moral, Physical, Mathematical, &c. we do not only examine the Principles of it, and attend to the Necessity of agreeing to the Proposition, but when the Truth of the Principles from which it is drawn is known, it is then also made use of for a Principle to draw Consequences from it, and to apply it to as many Cases as we can: Some of these Cases are difficult and compounded. When we love the Truth, we endeavour to solve these Difficulties our selves; and if we are not capable or fortunate enough to clear them perfectly, we look out for

felves and others: Whereas a spiteful Heart, that cannot endure the Credit others gain, and loves Darkness rather than Light, when it is obliged to receive Instruction from another.

Help, confulting feriously all that may add new Light, and omitting nothing that may solve the Difficulty to our

⁽i) To confer is the primitive Sense of the Latin Word Disputare: By its Etymology it signifies, to think differently. In many Passages of Cicero it only imports, to discourse with another. The ill Humour of Disputants has made this Word odious.

⁽k) Ut adversarium attente audiamus, atque ut ejus non solum sententias, sed etiam verba omnia excipiamus, vultus denique perspiciamus omnes, qui sensus animi plerumque indicant. Cic. de Orat. Lib. II.

another, and cannot obtain any Glory by its own Discoveries, endeavours to compass some by flarting Difficulties, and involving it felf and others in Darkness; and looks upon that Time as gained which it causeth them to lose; and thinks it advances in Proportion as it retards their Progress: Were there fewer Persons of this Character in the Commonwealth of Letters, the Sciences would be upon a different Foot than they are at present. If the Question were put to any of the Learned Tribe, he would tell you, That his Aim is the Truth, and the directing of others to it; but nothing is more rare than fuch an obliging Heart, as delights in affifting others to find it; but every one is for engroffing this Honour to himself; and nothing is more common than those envious Tempers, that take Pleasure in checking and confounding others by Disputes and Obscurities.

XX. IF all that is flinging, and raises of Railing and the Paffions in verbal Disputes, when, in the Heat of the Discourse, many indigested

Words escape, be faulty; it is certainly inexcufable in Disputes that are carried on in Writing, when we have convenient Time to polish and refine. It were to be wish'd, that the succeeding Authors would improve by the Examples of their Predecessors, and learn at least by Experience to be wife. What is the Tendency of those Sports of Fancy, Railleries? Why, by Degrees to provoke another. And what is the Effect of the Anger of two Disputants, but the Loss of the Truth, which escapes them, when they feek it not with Temper and Tranquility? In ferious Matters, all ought to be ferious. When we grow warm we declare War, and alledge feriously some Proofs; that are nothing less than Proofs. Prejudice returns, as Paffion encreases; and we should often be less distant from one another, if we had never thought of agreeing: An eager Impatience of getting the Day, commonly succeeds a faint Love of the Truth. The Emulation encreases, together with the Perplexity that enters the Question; when Heat and Vanity mingle with it, every Thing swells and grows important, though it were the meanest Trisse. The Question, whether the Plant that cover'd Jonas was an Ivy, or a Gourd, was ready to embroil the Church. When we perceive the Evidence of Truth, we pity those who do not see it; and if we despise them, it is still with Calmness; but when we have only weak Proofs, we are angry with those who examine them.

them. When we find in the Comments of old Manuscripts, in the Margin of some Passages from Origen, Eufebius, Apollinaris, &c. You lie, I anathematize you; what Idea must it give of the Taste and Method of the Antients?

SOMETIMES, in a Conference, Men are observed to draw near an Union; but the Itch of writing with Spirit, Brightness, and Poignancy taking Place of that Charity and Good-nature in replying, which seemed to animate the first Discourses, the Distance grows wider, the longer the Conference holds; they sly back on each Side as much as they had advanced; they retract, and deny all

they had before allowed.

What do the Writers of Books pretend to, when they fill their Works with their personal Quarrels? (1) Do not we always see, that after they have given a Comedy to the Public for some Time, they at last become the Contempt of it? The Controversy makes People laugh, and is read with Eagerness, while it is yet new; but after that is over, they can no longer bear this Kind of Writing, or at least resent every Thing of this Nature in them. It is therefore not proper to attack Men in this Manner; and if we are thus assaulted, we should take no Notice of it. The Public always resules its Esteem to those who crave it in this Manner, and often fight to wrest it from one another, before either of them is in Possession of it.

When Learned Men quarrel, they create a Comedy; they cause People to laugh, but at the same Time to despise them too. How bitterly soever, or unjustly we are invaded, we should answer those that would put us upon replying in the same Tone, as Socrates answer'd his Friends, who perswaded him to silence his Wise, and put an End to her Scolding by severe Usage; You would be diverted at our Cost, and heighten the Jest, by a Cry of, Well done, Socrates; Courage, Xantippe. When the Quarrel grows hot, the best Way is to end it by Silence.

IF

⁽¹⁾ Quid si cum pro altero dicas, litem tuam sacias, aut læsus efferare iracundia, causam relinquas, nihilne noceas? In quo ego, non quo libenter male audiam: sed quia ego causam non libenter relinquo, nimium patiens & lentus existimor: ----- Ex quo etiam illud assequor, ut si quis mihi male dicat, petulans aut plane insanus esse videatur. Cic. Orat. Lib. II.

412 A New TREATISE of PART IV.

IF we deserve to be rudely treated, the best Way would be to correct our selves; it is not by hard Returns that we are justified: If we do not deserve either Injuries, or Raillery, we must not believe our selves to be injur'd, or rally'd: All this should be only looked upon as the Talk of Children.

SOME may shew their Spite against a Man of Merit, but they cannot hurt him by insolent Expressions; he is

too much above fuch Infults. (m)

THE Injuries we despise lose their Credit; but if we are uneasy at them, we create a Suspicion, of having deserved them. An undeserved Injury falls on a Phantom. If fretful Expressions were ever allow'd, it would be only when we have nothing better to say.

BE content to oppose the Opinions of your Adversary by good Reasons, your Tranquility will give them the greater Force; he will be glad of an Opportunity to leave the real Dispute he could not maintain, to pass to endless personal Recriminations: The Vexation of seeing himself conquer'd, will render a Pretext to be peevish very

acceptable.

THE Quarrels of learned Men give them so much the less Credit, as the Subject of them is of smaller Importance: What Man of Sense would not rather be ignorant, than in a Passion about so frivolous a Question, whether the Terms, Es grave, an beavy Metal, signified among the Antients, a Coin of good Alloy, and a just Value, or only a Piece of Metal, estimated by its Weight?

As two learned Men in our Days, who

Mr. Perizonius have gone so far as to ridicule each others and Kuster. Names, and against all Modesty, to cast

Nicknames upon one another. Every Body knows the Adventure of *Timotheus* and *Philadelphus*, the first having, on the Signification of a Greek Word, staked his Beard, which the other cut off, and carried it triumphant all his Life-time.

As there is nothing that affects Men more fensibly than Contempt, nothing provokes them more than Raillery; so that to use it in Disputes is to fore-close the Mind of your Antagonist against all you would have enter into

it.

⁽m) Nullam injuriam illi facitis, sicut ne Diis quidem qui aras evertunt.

it. But should not we rather turn Error into Ridicule? and is not this one of the Privileges of, and most suitable to Truth, to be content with it self, and to spread a Joy

over all wherever it reigns? (n)

THERE are, however, Distinctions to be made, and Precautions to be used in this Matter. Raillery, as I have faid, causes Anger and Prejudices, (though not so much when it falls on Opinions, as on Persons;) by Consequence it renders an Enquiry more difficult: He that defends a bad Cause may equally use it; and if he has more Vivacity and Knowledge of the World, his Raillery will be more lively and fine; and fince that will be read with more Pleasure, it will have a greater Effect. It were therefore to be wish'd, that Men would forbear it on all Sides. at least, in Matters of pure Speculation. But when there is Occasion of correcting some Abuses, and the Abettors of them agree upon the Equity of the Principles, which we pretend they depart from, and own they ought not to forfake them; in these Cases it is proper to convince them. that they do in Effect swerve from them; but besides, it is necessary to make them sensible of the Groffness of their Error, and the Ridicule to which it exposes them, that they may conceive the greater Aversion to it. This Method is never more opposite, than in the Case of Abuses that are inveterate; and when a Custom, authorized by Time, makes us look upon some Errors with Indifference. whose Consequence ought not to be neglected.

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⁽n) Congruit & Veritati ridere quia lætans. Tertull. adv. Valens. Ch. VI.

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CHAP. XII.

Of Continu'd Discourses and Compositions distinguished into Articles.

The Advantage of a distinct Pe-



HE Mind grows weary, and its Force is exhaufted by continual Labour; the Attention flackening, it is less capable to examine the Force of Proofs, and the Truth of Propositions, or even to distinguish the true

Sense of them. Many Things escape a wearied Attention; therefore it is absolutely necessary to husband it, in order to render the Understanding of Things, and the Examination of Proofs more easy; in a Word, to save it all the Trouble you can. Men speak for the Advantage of those that hear; and they who write make themselves

Debtors to those that peruse their Works.

IT must be own'd, that a Discourse distributed into Articles, eases the Attention and Application of the Faculties confiderably. This Distribution offers naturally so many Opportunities, both to reflect on what has been read, and to rest a little: Whereas, in a continued Discourse, the Mind must seek where to pause, and where every Thought and Proof ended. Now fince a Part of the Attention is spent in making this Choice, and these Separations, there remains less of it to examine the Things themselves. continued Discourse carries us along like a Torrent; we follow it without knowing where to rest our Attention, any more than our Eyes.

THE Particles that connect the Parts of a continued Discourse are likewise another Clog; in joining what went before with what follow'd, they engage the Mind to

have

have in view at the same Time both the precedent and the consequent Words; they seem to remind us, that what follows cannot well be understood, without keeping in mind the Idea of what went before; yet the Bounds of our Understanding require us to consider each Part separately, before we compare them together, and look upon them at the same Instant.

I own, the preceeding Sense ought to prepare the Mind to comprehend better what follows; but you may not-withstanding come to the Knowledge of a second Thought, without immediately fixing your Attention on that which was to lead the Way to it; for that serves only to fortify the Attention, and to dispose it to turn, in a certain Manner, to a certain Point of View. This is the Use of

an Exordium.

II. I IMAGINE the Method of making Reasons for a a whole Discourse, as it were, only one continued Dissingle Article or Period, in cementing all course.

the Parts of it by Conjunctions, which has been in Use for so many Ages, owes its Original to Pleaders and Advocates. All their Aim was to come from the Bar victorious; and a continued Discourse was more proper to amuse the Judges and the Audience, than a Speech divided into Periods. They who were to answer it, were more perplexed to distinguish all the Parts of it, to leave none unanswer'd; and if one Part escap'd the Memory. they cried Victoria, and flatter'd themselves they had on some Points silenced their Adversary. Besides, the Judges prepoffessed, gained, or misled by Friendship, Bribes, or Party-Spirit, could more eafily fave their Honour, in difcuffing the Justness of the Reasons offer'd, whilst the Audience had but a confused Notion of them. But these very Motives ought to condemn this Method, in the Judgment of a Philosopher; all whose Views should only tend to establish the Truth, and facilitate the Knowledge of it. When the Proofs are good, they convince the better, by how much the Examination of them is the more eafy.

A CONTINUED Discourse, whose Parts are, as it were, set into one another, if, besides this, it be elegant, and pleases by the Choice and Cadence of Words, the Beauty of its Turns, and the Graces of Pronunciation, drives you on like a Stream; you are almost forced to yield to it, without knowing distinctly why; for how can you exa-

mine it? What can you fingle out from it? or where

can you stop in it? (a)

Reflections upon tell us, There are none in which Art is more concealed. I know that this is a celebrated Maxim; but is not this a condemning of Artem. Art, to affirm, That we dare not shew it, without being expos'd? Must we pass so

many Years in the Fatigues of the Schools, under the hard Government of Masters, to conceal from the Public even the Suspicions of learning any Thing from them? If it be an Ornament, why should one be afraid of its ap-

pearing?

THE first Cause of this Maxim was Vanity. Cicero tells us, That many Noble and Eloquent Romans disguis'd their Learning, that all might be ascribed to Nature. Yet there is more Merit and Praise (b) due to acquired Accomplishments, though Men of Genius are the more happy. But Vanity is the same, whether it be reasonable or not;

(a) Cum fertur tanquam torrens Oratio, quamvis multa cujufquemodi rapiat, nihil tamen teneas, nihil apprehendas, nufquam Orationem rapidam coerceas. Cic. Tusc. Quest. Lib. I.

Atque hæc cum uberius disputantur, & sussius, ut mihi est in animo facere, facilius essugiunt Academicorum calumniam; cum autem, ut Zeno solebat, brevius angustiusque concluduntur, tum apertiora sunt ad reprehendendum. Nam ut profluens amnis aut vix, aut nullo modo, conclusa autem aqua facile corrumpitur: sic orationis slumine reprehensoris vitia diluuntur, angustia autem conclusa orationis non facile se ipsa tutatur. De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

(b) Antonius. Semper ego existimavi jucundiorem & probabiliorem huic populo Oratorem fore, qui primum quam minimam artificii alicujus, deinde nullam Græcarum rerum significationem daret, atque ego idem existimavi pecudis esse, non hominis, cum tantas res Græci susciperent, prositerentur, agerent, seseque & vivendi res obscurissimas, & bene vivendi, & copiose dicendi rationem hominibus daturos pollicerentur, non admovere aurem, & si palam audire eos non auderes, ne minueres apud tuos cives auctoritatem tuam, subauscultando tamen excipere voces eorum, & procul quid narrarent, attendere. —————Ego ista studia non improbo, moderata modo sint. Opinionem istorum studiorum & susspicionem artificii apud eos, qui res judicent, Oratori adversarium esse arbitror: imminuit enim & Oratoris auctoritatem & orationis sidem. Cic. de Orat. Lib. II,

the Love of Excelling prevails over every other Confideration: Every Man may attain to any Thing, but a Genius cannot be acquir'd; so that they who have it are the more sure of being distinguish'd; Gaudeant bene nati.

BESIDES, when a Man is dexterous in an Art he has not study'd, it is judg'd, he might excell in any other, by his natural Talents. When he is formed by Reading, and the Instructions of Masters, all flatter themselves, that the like Education would have given them the like Advantages; but they are forced to own themselves in-

feriour to him, that owes all to his Genius.

THE Drynels of the Rules of the Schools, their barbarous Terms, starched Maxims, and constrained Method, destitute of the Charms of Variety, give just Cause of Aversion to all that seem form'd by such an Art. But this is no Disparagement of any one that is more reasonable; for Persons of a good Taste, and perhaps others also, cannot be long pleased, with a Composition destitute of the Rules of Taste, and true Art, the Persection of it.

An Author disobliges, when he lets, all the Care he has taken to please, appear: Men chuse rather to be ungrateful, than own themselves so much obliged to him, as he

feems to expect.

ALL we suffer in our Youth under splenetic, imperious, positive, disheartening Masters, (as most of them are) give us an Aversion to every Thing that is like the Method used in Schools, or awakens the Idea of it. I have known Men of Sense in Pain at the Sight of a College, or the

very Covering of a Book.

FEW Men study purely for the Love of Truth. Some are determin'd to it by Ambition, and this makes them fierce, impatient of Contradiction, uneasy at the Reputation of another, and puts them out of Humour. Those who subsist by their Learning, and live under Confiraint, are necessitous, and naturally austere, melancholy, and shocking. They, whom Discontent drives to Retirement, and read to amuse themselves in their Solitude, do not talte, at first, a true Satisfaction; at the Bottom they have much Regret, so that they readily take a Habit of being exceffively ferious. Some, out of a melancholy or Superstitious Temper, leave the Commerce of Men; so that in their Mind, and Appearance too, they must have a prevailing Sadness. Now as we insensibly take after the Manners VOL. II. Ee

of those to whom we are attach'd, and Masters are commonly subject to these Faults, the Commonwealth of Letters is almost all composed of Persons that are too serious and gloomy. Add, that Men are feldom advanc'd till they are in Years, and then Infirmities and Disappointments leave them more Disquiet than Joy: Then they think they have a Right to turn Authors; and as a Man's Heart is painted in his Writings, the Style and Turn of most Books take something from the Humour of the Author; and this Chagrin is communicated to those who read them with Attention: So that Study, which ought of all Things to contribute most to a Man's Satisfaction, sometimes puts him out of Humour, and spoils his Gaiety. I guess these to be the Causes why the Men of the World have an Aversion for all that has the Air of a College, or of the Rules of Study.

HAD not Men learn'd Horace and Virgil at School, they would have been still more charm'd with them: They say, that M. A Ablancourt took a Distaste at Tullius, because he could not help looking upon him as a School-Master: I have had some Trouble to get rid of such like Ideas.

Some, to make a Shew of their Ability, or sometime to prevent Criticism, display their Art, justify their Method, and give a Reason for the Order in which they treat upon a Subject: In this they give a needless Pain and Fatigue to their Hearers, who would willingly dispense with it. Some labour hard at it, and leave a Print of their heavy Steps in their Works; they appear mark'd like the first Design of a Picture: Therefore they displease, and the Hearer naturally takes a Share in his Pains, who fatigues himself so much to instruct him. The Care we take to polish and finish a Discourse should not appear: A Column, a Diamond perfectly polished, seem to have been naturally produced in that State; we do not perceive the least Trace of the Instrument that was used. So the most labour'd Discourse should appear to be distated by Nature it felf, and be presented to the Mind of him, who pronounces it, with the same Ease, as it is to the Mind of him that hears it; and it is in this Sense that Art must be concealed.

IV. A CONTINUED Discourse is more proper to raise the Passions, because it does not leave Time to the Mind to recover it self, and return from its first Agitation: But if you would have a Passion lasting, you must put it upon

PART IV. the Art of THINKING.

a folid Foundation, that is, the Evidence of the Ideas, the Justness of the Reasons that recommend it. Now there is most Evidence and Certainty in a Discourse, that is

most easy to be understood and examined.

HE that would raise a Passion in his Auditor, must first have clear and just Ideas of the Objects of that Pasfion, and be fill'd with the Idea of these Objects; he must fix his Attention upon them, make them present to him; and when he finds himself moved by these Considerations, if he has formed a just Style, if his Expressions are exact and judicious, they will fall from his Pen according to the Motions that agitate him: He may then examine the Order of his Ideas, the Choice and Turn of his Expressions, by the Nature and Rules of the Passion he would raife. Thus, after having placed an Auditor in the same Point of View where he is himself, when he expresses to him, after a lively Manner, what he fees, and what he feels, he will easily bring it about to make him see and feel the fame.



greatest Pare of what we learn in it. So that this kind

Exist, with all policy lis distributed in the Mills with the color of
Of Dialogues.

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me the hardest of all Com- of Dialogues. positions. Few can, in the months Solitude of the Closer, preserve all the Fire that is necessary to express themselves with, that Variety, those natural and easy Turns,

that make up the Charms of Conversation. II. I SHALL not speak here of that dogmos nor Form of Dialogue, in which we introduce of scholastie a Master, making his Scholar write the Dialogues. Lesson he has set him; like Catechisms, with the and the Compendiums of Professors. It would be more natural, I think, for the Scholar to ask his Master, in order to instruct himself; or that a Master should directly lead his Scholar, by a Series of Questions, to find out Ee 2

The Advantage and employ the Attention; they both aof Dialogues. muse and instruct. The Pleasure we take

of a continued Attention, but supports and renews it in that Manner, that it prevents all Fatigue. As we are born for Society, and formed by a long Habit to seek our Pleafure in it, whatever gives us any Appearance of it, offers an agreeable View; and Solitude having been often tire-some to us, we are pleased with all that keeps off the Idea of it. In reading a Dialogue, we mingle, as it were, in the Conversation; we join sometimes with one that speaks, and sometimes with another. We aid our selves therein, and so think we draw from our own Stock the greatest Part of what we learn in it. So that this Kind of Writing has been relish'd in all Ages, and is one of the most antient.

Two Hours reading of a Play gives much Pleasure to great Numbers of Men; but a Narrative of the same Extent, written with all possible Circumstances and Vivacity, would hardly be read at once without some Struggle.

IV. In writing a Dialogue you must, release 1st, Chuse a Subject proper for Conversation. 2dly, Make it extreamly familiar to you, that you may attend the less to the Things themselves, and be perfectly employ'd in executing the Turn you have chosen for the writing of them. 3dly, The Characters of the Interlocutors should exactly answer your Design; and that each may sustain his proper Part, it is proper to have been acquainted with such Persons, to have conversed with them, and to make them present to you when you compose.

V. But you must especially know all that is necessary to make a Conversation make our selves agreeable.

agreeable in SINCE all Constraint must be banished Conversation. from it, and nothing admitted, that is not easy, free, and natural; it may seem to be a Contradiction to prescribe Rules to it, therefore those

I shall

I shall prescribe, shall only tend to form the Heart to please, in yielding it self to its natural Inclinations, without any Occasion to mind Rules: Therefore, to please Men of good Taste in Conversation, you must,

FIRST, Not venture to speak on Subjects you do not clearly know, and have not well reflected upon, or, however, no more than you know of them; distinguishing that from the unknown Part, and endeavouring rather to inform your felf, than others

inform your felf, than others.

SECONDLY, You must be Master of the Tongue you speak in, that you may express it with Pureness, Ease, and Variety.

THIRDLY, If you would be eafy and free, you must really be what you would appear: (a) A Man of Sense and Honour is free and easy, and charms on that very Account; a vitious Man creates Horror, if he shews himself plainly; and is troublesome and despicable, if he masks himself. It is in vain for him to dissemble; that very Care exposes him, and he can never keep long from being discovered. Indeed it is easier to be an honest Man than to counterfeit one; Art is an ill Copier of Nature, and ever betrays it self in some Place or other, were it only by over-straining what it endeavours to imitate. (b) It is with Conversation, as with the Letters spoken of by Montagne: They that cost me most, are worth least; when once I linger about them, it is a Sign that I do not follow them.

VI. I THINK Men ought to forbear The Advantage using the Mask towards one another; for of Sincerity.

A Man makes a long Harangue upon the Probity of his Heart, his Difinterestedness, and other amiable Qualities which he is not Master of: It is possible, that by the Simplicity of his Turns, and the Ingenuity of his Air, he has given Proofs of his Art to those who are Judges of it;

E e 3

(a) Nemo potest personam diu ferre. Ficta cito in naturam suam recidunt: quibus veritas subest, quæque (ut ita dicam) ex solido enascuntur, tempore ipso in majus meliusque procedunt. Sen. de Clem. Lib. I. Cap. 1.

⁽b) "A generous Soul, well versed in the Disposition of Mankind, "makes it self plainly agreeable to it self. Art is nothing but the "Counterpart," and the Register of the Productions of such a Soul. "Mont. B. III. Ch. 3.

but whom has he convinc'd? All his Hearers perceive the Vanity of his Speaking, when his Actions belie his Words, Yet perhaps there is not any of them, that, in his Turn, and upon Occasion, does not imitate the Assurance, and the Diffimulation, which he has condemn'd and pronounced useless. Do they believe they are more subtle. and more fortunate? Do they reckon farther on a Want of Discernment in those that hear them? Perhaps they have none of these Views, but take a Pleasure in speaking well of themselves, and it is that Pleasure alone that

employs them.

WHAT Trouble would a Man fave himself, would he but lay afide the Fancy of passing for what he is not? I am not at all surprised, that a Man, four hundred Leagues distant from his Country, should run into an Expence exceeding his Income; he travels to know the World, and to improve himself by it; he sees that all is Comedy, and that Men are placed upon the Stage the more honourably, and in a Capacity of making a better Shew, the more richly they are masked: But when, in the very Bosom of their Country, Numbers of Men, who know the Income of one another, as well as their own, endeavour to dazzle and deceive one another; and are, during their whole Lives, in Pain, and uneasy to play a Comedy with one another; this is not so easy to comprehend, and cannot be accounted for, on the Supposition that Men are reafonable Creatures.

WHEN Men affect to appear possessed of Qualities they have not, they make us suspect a Disguise in those they really have. Would you gain the Esteem and Friendship of those you converse with, let them know you, and do not hide what you have of Goodness and Excellency, by turning their Attention to Appearances of what you have not. What was particularly faid of an Orator, that to be perfectly so, he must be a real honest Man, extends it self to every Part of Life; Difguise does Harm in every Thing, (c)

THE

per tensor du terre. Petra create monerar que

⁽e) " I find in the Writings of the Antients, that he who speaks " what he thinks, hits the Mark more forcibly than he who coun-" terfeits. Hear Cicero talk of the Love of Liberty: Hear Brutus " speak of it: His very Writings found, that this was the Man

THE finest natural Parts are disfigur'd by Constraint: A Man that might have been rank'd in the foremost Class, becomes so despicable by an Over-strain, that we can hardly place him in a Mediocrity. Such a one would charm the least prejudiced in his Favour, and please the most difficult, who by his continual and ever-forced Regard to himself, fatigues his best Friends.

VII. In short, to please, a Man must To love sincerely. oblige; and to oblige he must love. When you love those you converse with purely, fincerely, without Interest, that is, without a View of Gain, or the Effects of their Credit and Reputation, or the Return of their Praises; when you love them, as a Father loves his Children, or as a Brother his Brethren; when you please your felf in pleasing them; and when the Satisfaction of having Success is Recompence enough for the Pains you take in Behalf of their Advantage; when, I say, the Heart is thus disposed, the Things you say, and the Manner in which you express them, will have nothing in it that does not relish well. You will be filent in due Time, and speak when and as long as you ought, supposing you have otherwife a just Understanding, so as not to give into a false Way of Thinking; and a Mind that is enlarged enough to attend, without Force and Constraint, upon your self to all the Circumstances of Place, Time, and Persons, in order to proportion exactly both what you fay, and the Manner of faying it. Till you are thus prepared, and have formed your Interior, I think, you should hear, and be

A MAN, whose reigning Inclination tends to oblige, and make himself truly useful, speaks for others, not for himself; and whatever Superiority of Genius he has, he is not troublesome, or a Load upon others, because he does not endeavour to make himself regarded. We see however, that he is, what he does not feek to be; and by this owe totlow efter Appear A.B., we for lake the Reality;

filent, or, at least, speak very little. of it would be med

by the Street of appearing what we are not, we ob-

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to purchase it at the Price of his Blood. When Cicero the Father " of Eloquence, treats of the Contempt of Death; when Seneca

[&]quot;likewise discourses upon it, the latter drags on the Subject in a " languishing Manner; and you find, that he would have you re-

[&]quot; folve upon a Thing of which he is not in the least resolved. He " gives you no Heart, for he has none himself; the other animates

[&]quot; and enflames you, Mont. B. II. Ch. 31.

we are equally charmed with his Heart and his Understanding; his Discourses instruct, his Modesty charms; he does not at all weary us, for this very Reason, because

we love him, and are pleased to hear him.

THE Pleasure we find in obliging, makes us hearken to others with Attention, and seize with Eagerness the Opportunities of approving all they fay that is just, and of profiting by it: For we oblige willingly those we love, therefore we hear them; we entertain our selves with them upon what they know, and we decline the making them sensible of any Superiority.

THE most natural Manner is always the most graceful: Now Man is a Being to whom nothing ought to be

more natural, than Reason and Good-nature.

WHEN we love fincerely, when we endeayour to make our felves useful, and defire to please in that View, these Dispositions of Heart give a Charm to all we say and do. and an Efficacy which no Art can bestow: Nothing enters the Heart more furely, than what comes from it. Whence

is it, as Epictetus demanded of the Philoso-Arrian. Epict. phers, that ignorant Men often perswade their Hearers a great deal sooner than your selves Lib. III. can do? It is because they speak as they

think, from the bottom of their Hearts; whereas your fine Lessons, dwelling only upon your Lips, are faint and life-

lefs.

This Advice does not only regard those who would gain the Favour of the Public, but those who would please in Conversation: The Interest of another ought to make us forget our own. What a shameful Hypocrify would it be to pais for one that is zealous of the Salvation of Men, when you feek only their Applauses? (d)

In general, the Humour of living, of establishing one's felf, and being great in the Imagination of others, is one of the greatest Mistakes we can fall into. In proportion as we follow after Appearance, we forfake the Reality; and by the Struggle of appearing what we are not, we obstruct the End we aim at by it: A Man who is destitute

⁽d) Hoc proposito in turbam prodeunt, ut meliores fiant, faciantque meliores, ---- Quid enim turpius Philosophia captante clamores? Sen. Ep. LII.

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of an Estate, and lives expensively to get the Reputation of being rich, grows every Day poorer: and one that knows little, but to appear knowing, puts his Ideas every Day in greater Confusion, and accustoms himself to be satisfy'd with Words, and to talk without knowing what he says.

VIII. ONE good Method to form the The Means of Mind and the Heart, and affure our felves having proper whether we have really made a Progress in Dispositions of the Acquisition of these Virtues and Talents, is to resect upon what we have said and

done in Company; and not only upon what we have said and done our selves, but farther, upon all that we have been Witnesses of. I am certain, that all the Faults we shall then observe will shew us the Necessity of the Principles I am now laying down.

IX. THE Heart of a Man must be tho- Of Raillery.

roughly touch'd with these Principles, and all its Movements governed by them, in order to his raillying properly, and not raillying any otherwise than to the Purpose. To make others sensible of the Ridicule of any Vice, without giving a Suspicion to your Hearers, that you have them in view more than the Vice; and again, to heighten some little Desects, without giving the Persons raillied an Opinion that you do not esteem or love them, you must not only have much Knowledge, Dexterity, and Extent of Understanding, and Facility of Expression, but you must likewise be endowed with a good Heart, an extream Delicacy of Sentiments, and a real Aversion to the making any Person uneasy.

The greatest Part of those that railly, study only to shew the Superiority of their pretended Genius; but if you make a just Enquiry into it, you will find it reduced to a great deal of Boldness and Malice. If they imagine, that the Attention we give them, and the Pleasure they create, is a Proof of the good Taste we find in them, they are mistaken; it is not the reasonable Pleasure of hearing fine Things, it is the ill-natur'd Pleasure of seeing People mortify'd, that draws our Attention: Far from loving them, we do, on the contrary, fear them, and secretly hate them, in Proportion to the Diversion they afford us; so that we are always pleased to see their Vanity confounded, and

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their Fluency of Talking check'd by others, who have a fuperior Stroke at Rallery. (e)

" THE

(e) Locus autem & regio quasi ridiculi (nam id proxime quæritur) turpitudine & desormitate quadam continetur. Hæc enim ridentur vel sola, vel maxime, quæ notant & designant turpitudinem aliquam non turpiter. Est autem, ut ad illum tertium veniam, est plane O-ratoris movere risum, vel quod ipsa hilaritas benevolentiam conciliat ei, per quem excitata est: vel quod admirantur omnes acumen uno sepe in verbo positum, maxime respondentis, nonnunquam etiam lacessentis: vel quod frangit adversarium, quod impedit, quod elevat, quod deterret, quod resurat: vel quod ipsum Oratorem politum hominum esse significat, quod eruditum, quod urbanum, maximeque quod trissitiam ac severitatem mitigat & relaxat, odiosas res sæpe, quas argumentis dilui, non facile est, joco risuque dissolvit.

Nec infignis improbitas, & scelere juncta, nec rursus miseria infignis agitata ridetur: facinorosos enim majore quadam vi, quam ridiculi, vulnerari volunt, miseros illudi nolunt, nisi si se forte jactant. Parcendum est autem maxime caritati hominum, ne temere in eos dicas, qui diliguntur. Hac igitur adhibenda est primum in jocando moderatio: itaque ca facillime luduntur, qua neque odio magno, nec misericordia maxima digna sunt. Quamobrem materies omnis ridiculorum est in istis vitiis, quae sunt in vita hominum, neque charorum, neque calamitosorum, neque corum, qui ob facinus ad supplicium rapiendi videntur, caque belle agitata ridentur. Est etiam desormitatis & corporis vitiorum satis bella materies ad jocandum. Sed quaerimus idem, quod in cateris rebus maxime quaerendum est, quatenus. In quo non modo illud praecipitur, ne quid intulse, sed etiam siquid perridiculi vitandum est Oratori utrumque, ne aut scurrilis jocus sit, aut mimicus. -----

Hoc opinor, primum, ne, quotiescumque potuerit dictum dici, necesse habeamus dicere. -----

Temporis igitur ratio & ipfius dicacitatis moderatio, & temperantia, & raritas dictorum diftinguet Oratorem a fcurra: & quod nos cum caufa dicimus, non ut ridiculi videamur, fed ut proficiamus aliquid, illi totum diem, & fine caufa -----

Atque hoc etiam animadvertendum est, non esse omnia ridicula faceta. Quid enim potest tam ridiculum quam Sannio est? sed ore; valtu, imitandis moribus, voce denique corpore ipso ridetur. Sassum hanc possum dicere, atque ita non ut ejusmodi Oratorem esse velim, sed ut Mimum. Quare primum hoc genus est, quod risum vel maxime movet, non est nostrum, morosum, superstitiosum, suspiciosum, gloriosum, stultum. Naturæ ridentur ipsæ, quas personas agitare solemus, non sustinere. Alterum genus est imitatione admodum ridiculum

THE Instructions given by Cicero upon Rallery may be easily follow'd, if our Hearts be season'd with those Principles we have recommended. "To know how to railly "well, is the Character of a polite Man, and one that is "well-read in the World; we love those who divert us, "we take a Pleasure in hearing a Thing finely hit off: "We sometimes luckily get rid of an Affair, by trisling upon a Subject; for there are some that would appear too odious, were you to treat them seriously.

"IT would be too cruel to deride an unfortunate Per"fon: Rallery is not suitable to Objects that require
"Compassion. Great Crimes ought also to move our
"Horror, not our Laughter. There is a wide Distance
between a Banterer and a Bussion; it is worse still to
descend to Obscenities: Rallery is not reasonable any
farther than it is useful. We cannot rally justly, if
we do it always; nor must we take Advantage of all

"Opportunities for it that present themselves."

There are Rules for Conversation, like those for Style: Attention to general Rules may keep us from Faults and Impersections; but a Man must have an Understanding that is just, various, abundant, delicate, a Taste form'd by Reading, by the Practice and Knowledge of the World, by Reflection, to arrive at those Qualities that make us pleasing, and give us Charms, in the Conversation and Commerce of the World. Rules will prevent a Defect, but not create a Beauty; this is the Fruit of natural Parts and Temper; but of such natural Parts and Dispositions, as we have taken Care to improve.

X. I Do not pretend to give Rules and Conclusion.

Instructions, that will qualify us to please such Men as we do not esteem, nor love at all; such as are unworthy of Love and Esteem. When we have any Relish for Philosophy, that is, any Love for Truth and Wisdom, we shall never bring our selves to be false to our own Sentiments; we shall never sink to Flatteries, or childish Manners, nor, in one Word, to unworthy Compliances. I never had Occasion my self to think of these Rules,

ridiculum, sed nobis tantum licet furtim, si quando, & cursim. Alterum minime est liberale. Tertium, oris deprivatio, non digna nobis. Quartum, obscenitas, non solum non soro digna, sed vix convivio liberorum. Cic. de Orat. Lib. II.

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Rules, as to Practice. Providence having alotted me my Birth in a Corner of the World, where I never found them of any confiderable Use; a Place, whose Advantages of Fortune are but small. And the they were otherwise, those to which a Man might advance by Candour and Probity, are those alone which I value; and there is nothing, that I should not think too dearly bought by Difguise. Liberty is so valuable a Good, that no other is capable of repairing the Lofs of it. form-potent black of the a

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